Dante

by

Ozanam

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DANTE

AND

CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY

IN THE

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

BY

FRÉDÉRIC OZANAM

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY LUCIA D. PYCHOWSKA

SECOND EDITION

* * *

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PREFACE.

Desirous of enlightening those who lived in the shade or in the gloom, Dante chanted the grandest of poems in a vulgar tongue. Even the lyre of his Master, Virgil, seemed too small for him who aspired, through a perfect art, to be a perpetual and universal teacher of Christian truth. Putting aside Latin, and choosing Italian as the medium of his verse, the poet did wisely; and yet the use of a living language has not made him a poet of the people. We have all read the pretty tales, recounting how the simplest of Italian folk were wont to please themselves as they labored, and, at the same time, to astonish ingenuous barbarians, by singing intelligently whole cantos of the Divine Comedy; but vainly shall we seek the names of these intellectual proletarians. Boccaccio would not risk an interpretation of Dante's masterpiece, before invoking, with the greatest humility, the assistance of the God of Light. Five centuries have passed since Boccaccio's famous and imperfect essay. Age after age, religiously, patiently, scholars have toiled over the pages of the Divine Com-

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edy. Still, in our day, a writer of uncommon learning and intellect, Cesare Cantù, has said that "even an Italian reader of Dante's trilogy is obliged to study it as if it were a foreign book, consulting, alternately, the text and a commentary." Whatever his fate, had the poet of the universe sang always to the music of the little lyre he first tempted, he has been, and is, and will ever be the poet of educated people only; and, even among these, he can be understood, inasmuch as he is intelligible, by the studious alone.

Though a reckless or an incompetent translator may relieve us of many of the difficulties that an Italian cannot escape, no translator, however skilful, can turn Dante's text into light reading. As Frederick von Schlegel wrote, when M. Ozanam was in his cradle: "A preparatory initiation into a vast extent of varied knowledge is necessary, in order to understand the poem either as a whole or in detail." Dante's geography and astronomy are not those of our school books. The allegory of the poem is far from being transparent. One may be well read, and yet find the poet's local history and allusions puzzling. And how many fairly educated persons can follow the poet closely, as he developes and resolves the most practical cases in ethics, and the most abstruse questions in theology and philosophy!

Within a twelvemonth, I read a review of no less than fifty-three Italian works, recently published, intended to explicate, or to illustrate, Dante's text; and the Venetian and Tuscan critics require at least two periodicals to hold and preserve their lucubrations. Foreigners may consider themselves fortunate in escaping a school of criticism so voluminous and so distracting, whose chief apology is the poet's frequent and vain-glorious abuse of that same vulgar tongue which he adopted for the sake of the plain people; and yet the foreigner is helpless without the critic and the commentator.

Within the last fifty years, in Italy as well as outside of Italy, the world of learning has shown the most helpful and healthful appreciation of Dante's work, great and small. American as well as English students have composed creditable translations of his master-poem and many volumes intended to explain away difficulties, to familiarize a reader with the poet's personality, to explicate his teaching or to describe the machinery of the Inferno, the Purgatory, and the Paradise. Helpful and healthful are not epithets applicable however, to all the volumes published in English or in the languages of the continent. Many have been harmful and even vicious. For a long time in Italy, the spirit of revolt has pretended to derive inspiration from Dante's pages, and, to-day, the Italian Anarchists, enemies of God and of mankind, shamefully claim him as a precursor. The Protestant tradition that the most illustrious of Catholic poets was a foe to the Papacy is still alive, and though many non-Catholics are led to study the trilogy because of Dante's glorious imagination; strange philosophical and theological science; forcible, compact, unique style; passionate expression of sentiment and of creed; there are few who are not prejudiced in his favor, especially, and one might say invincibly, because, more or less justly, he attacked ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic Church, and, more or less considerately, censured evils that afflicted the Church, in his day. Only a Catholic can duly estimate the value of Dante's censures, which, however violent, impugn in no wise the doctrine or the divine organization of the Church; as only a Catholic can, with full intelligence and perfect sympathy, comprehend the philosophical views and theological tenets of the meditative religious poet, who "towers above all others in solitary grandeur."

Of Catholic English guides through the intricacies of the Dantean labyrinth, there has been a dearth, all the more surprising when we recall the many good books written in Italian, French and German. Not more than a couple, among the several volumes deserving a careful translation, have been offered to a public that should have, and that daily shows an increasing desire to have, a more familiar acquaintance with the grandest of Catholic poets, and the most sublime of all poets. We cannot doubt, therefore, of the success of this agreeable translation of Frédéric Ozanam's: *Dante, and Catholic Philosophy in the Thirteenth Century*, a work received with general applause at the time of its publication, and one whose utility has not been diminished by the lapse of years.

More than once M. Ozanam has told how his interest in the poet was first awakened. During a visit to Rome, in the year 1833, when he was just twenty years of age, the sensitive and thoughtful Frenchman found himself, one day, standing in the *Camera della Segnatura* before Raphael's *Disputa.* Lowering his eyes from the heaven in which angels and saints are grouped beneath the Blessed Trinity, he began to examine the faces of the doctors and pontiffs of the Church, who are distributed on either side of the altar of the Most Blessed Sacrament. One head, garlanded with laurel, attracted him. Who was the noble and austere stranger that Raphael deemed worthy of a place beside St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, and Innocent III.? Dante! Why should the painter thus honor a poet? This question M. Ozanam answered satisfactorily, only after years of most patient and enthusiastic study.

His first essay on the subject was written in 1838, when he competed for the degree of Doctor of Letters. Seven years later the first edition of the present work appeared; and shortly afterwards, it found one German and no less than four Italian translators. In 1843 M. Ozanam began a series of studies, which were printed in *Le Correspondant*, on "The Franciscan poets in Italy during the Thirteenth century"; a series that he completed and published only a short time before his death in 1853. Not the least valuable chapter in this admirable volume, which still awaits a translator, is the one dealing with "The Poetical Sources of the Divine Comedy." To fit himself to solve the problem that Raphael made for him, M. Ozanam undertook a French translation of the Divine Comedy, with an extended commentary on the poem. Seven years he devoted to this work; and of the seven, four were expended on the Purgatory alone. Could we ask for a more telling proof that Dante can be "popularized" only among the educated and the studious!

Nominated, in the autumn of 1844, a Professor in the Sorbonne, for life, M. Ozanam determined to turn his studies on Dante to profitable use. He had always intended that they should serve to illustrate the comprehensive history of Christian civilization which he had planned in his youth; and it was in accordance with this design that he made the Divine Comedy the subject of his lectures, at the Sorbonne, between the years 1847 and 1850. Of his translation and commentary, we have only "The Purgatory of Dante," published after M. Ozanam's death; a work that has passed through several editions, and that has benefited many students of the incomparable Catholic poet.

Readers of "*Dante, and Catholic Philosophy in the Thirteenth Century*" can feel assured of the competence and honesty of their guide. His chief aim was, once for all, to expose the guile of those who sought to associate Dante,—who so passionately loved truth and the disciples of truth and who gloried in anathematizing public errors and the adepts of error,—with "the tumultuous rabble of the heterodox"; and then, doing the poet justice, to prove his right to stand, where Raphael placed him, "among the most noble disciples of eternal orthodoxy."

With textual difficulties, with criticism purely literary, M. Ozanam did not occupy himself. He confined himself to the study of Dante as a statesman and philosopher; to his political experiences and philosophical education; to a sketch of the philosophical movement, prior to the thirteenth century; to a review of the poet's philosophical opinions and of the teaching of his preceptors. The author of "*Dante, and the Philosophy of the Thirteenth Century*" did not exhaust the subject. He made no such pretension. His purpose was merely to culture a small part of a most fruitful field that had long been allowed to lie fallow.

Commendation of a work which has stood the test of half a century of criticism, would be presumptuous. M. Ozanam knew how to interest as well as to instruct. A reader of this volume will find that he has formed an acquaintance not alone with Dante, the philosopher, but also with Dante the man; and that the author has brought the thirteenth century very near to us, permitting us to appreciate more intelligently its characteristics, and profitably to compare mediæval civilization with that which we call modern. Perhaps, treating of the poet's political opinions, M. Ozanam attributed to them, here and there, a signification that the poet himself would have disowned. Still the author's ingenious views may suggest to some industrious Catholic a closer study of a tempestuous period of French history; a period covering the years between 1830 and 1853. If M. Ozanam's political views had a peculiar tint, it was merely a reflection of the color of his time.

The mere mention of the name of Antoine Frédéric Ozanam tempts one to write at length of the virtuous and talented and brave, and, above all, charitable champion of the Catholic faith, rather than of the scholar, writer and orator. Still it is fitting here to recall his gift of eloquence; a gift that, long before his appointment to the Sorbonne, had gained him fame and position. How eloquent he could be, with the written as well as with the spoken word, many passages in this book manifest. The mastery of the Italian singer, the majesty of his conception, the virile power of his language, the vivacity of his imagination, could not fail to arouse the sensitive soul of Ozanam, especially when he was engaged in searching the soul of one who loved, with a love so tender, so ardent, so loyal "the daughter of God, the Queen of things, noble and beautiful above all others, Philosophy."

The translation of "*Dante, and the Philosophy of the Thirteenth Century*," now presented to an enlightened public, needs no compliment other than that paid it by an American writer, widely esteemed, and affectionately cherished by all who knew him personally,—Brother Azarias. He stood sponsor for the work, as I am informed by the distinguished Director of the Cathedral Library, pronouncing it excellent. Thanks to him also, it found a long-sought publisher, in the person of one who has done much to keep alive the memory of the modest Christian Brother, whose rare talents were ever devoted to the cause of Catholic truth. His scholarly essay on the Spiritual Sense of the Divina Commedia, evinced extensive research and fruitful study, and adds weight to his approval of this volume.

Hearing that the translator is one of the gentler—and shall I not say: the more poetical—sex, Catholic men may express surprise; and indeed a few may feel remorse. Let us hope that, influenced by the example of one painstaking and intellectual woman, others may be led to attempt work no less serious and serviceable, leaving the "short story" to the more volatile and vain male sex. To me, it seems eminently right and proper that a woman should have made it possible for English readers to acquire a correct notion of the philosophy of Dante, as well as of the scope and aim of the Divine Comedy. Was there ever a man who honored women with an affection like unto that the poet avowed for those "three blessed ladies," Beatrice, St. Lucy and the Virgin Mother of God!

Great works demand and deserve meditation; and, in a sense, all good books are great. Dante's epic compels meditation; M. Ozanam's good book deserves meditation. Not alone silver shall a delver find in it, but also the more precious gold. The poet gave an example to all who would have sound knowledge about deep things. At first it was difficult for him to enter into the thoughts of the philosophers; but he persisted, and finally, through patience, he penetrated them. Not to his patience, or to the natural powers of his mind, did he award all the credit for his successful mastery of things subtle and profound. After pondering long over books, having sought Philosophy where alone she loves to dwell, "in the schools of the religious and in the assemblies of philosophers," Dante felt bound, giving the world the result of his experience, to inculcate a lesson; an old lesson, though one not easily learned. "*May God permit thee, reader, to gather fruit from thy reading*," said the poet, in "the twentieth strain of the first song, whose awful theme records the spirits whelmed in woe." These significant words may well serve as an introduction to Frédéric Ozanam's: *Dante, and Catholic Philosophy in the Thirteenth Century.*

JOHN A. MOONEY.

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DANTE, AND CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

Tradition of Letters in Italy, from the Latin Decadence to Dante.

AMID the doubts and passions disquieting our age, the past interests us mainly by its relations to ourselves, that is, by what we still retain of it. The chief interest of the history of literature consists in seeking out among the intellectual monuments of all the ages, the ways of Providence and the general laws governing the human mind. Literatures follow one another: we are concerned in knowing whether they are bound together and continue one another; whether, by the side of the poetic instincts which everywhere awake spontaneously, there is a learned discipline, which constitutes art, and which the nations transmit one to another, always taught and always teaching, accomplishing but one and the same work as they follow one and the same destiny. To state the question in briefer terms, what we wish to know is if there exists a tradition of letters.

Modern researches have begun to re-link in history the succession of epochs. On one side, the languages, legends, and doctrines of classic antiquity, which were thought to have originated in the regions where they chiefly flourished, have been connected with the civilizations of the Orient. The old pretensions to autochthonous development have disappeared before the proofs of a common and distant derivation. On the other side, in the little known depths of the Middle Ages, in the systems of its schools, and in the works of its great masters, we have been obliged to recognize the legitimate sources of modern science and art. The world at large has ceased to date from Luther the awakening of human reason. Thus has been established on the one hand the unity of the centuries of antiquity, and on the other, that of the Christian ages. It now remains to study more closely the interval separating these two eras in the world's history. We must examine whether letters perished during the terrible years occupied by the fall of the Roman Empire and the incursions of the barbarians. Were they then extinguished to be subsequently revived by a concurrence of favorable circumstances, or did they undergo a transformation which was to save them, and thus preserve continuity of instruction?

The Renaissance, for a long time placed at the period of the taking of Constantinople, has by some been thrown back to the date of the Crusades, and by others to the reign of Charlemagne.

Even before Charlemagne, we find the Roman muses sheltered in Irish and Anglo-Saxon monasteries. But we must come to closer quarters with these researches. They should be pursued on their proper ground, in Italy, the last refuge of antiquity and the starting point of the Middle Ages. There it is that we may obtain a view of the most memorable transition which has ever taken place. Through what phases did letters pass during eleven hundred years, from the Latin decadence to the first writings in the vulgar tongue? How did the human mind lay aside its pagan habits to take on a new character? This is the revolution we shall endeavor to follow, seeking in its long course to discover, if we can, the unity of the tradition of letters. First, we will consider that tradition as existing among the Romans, such as antiquity had made it in the age of Augustus; then we will watch it as regenerated by Christianity; we will examine whether it traversed the period of barbarism, and how it was reproduced in the works of Italian genius, whence in turn it went forth to reign over every literature in Europe.

I.

If we consider Roman civilization at the opening of the modern era, we shall find that it had its roots in the whole of antiquity. We see in it the result and abridgment of the anterior civilizations, and, as it were, the latest effort of the human mind after the lapse of four thousand years. The Latin language itself, by the incon testable originality of its character, by its radical analogies with the Greek and the Sanscrit, bears witness to the primitive relations existing between the Orient, Greece, and Italy. Rome appears to have received from the East, through the Etruscans, its gravest religious institutions, the remains of a disfigured truth not lacking grandeur. I mean that science of auguries and worship of the *manes* which made of life a ceaseless communion with the gods and with ancestral spirits. The arts and the sense of beauty came to Rome from Greece. through the neighborhood of the Dorian cities of Calabria and Sicily. Later, after the Macedonian war, Greek pedagogues were to be bought in the slave market; patrician youths studied in the schools of Athens or of Rhodes; the Latin muses grew rich by imitation, another species of conquest. But the characteristic quality of the Roman genius, that which it owed only to itself and to the old Latium where it had its birth, was the practical sense of justice, the instinct of rights, of law. Laws were reduced to a science—*jurisprudence.* Eloquence defended law at home, while arms imposed it abroad; the entire existence of the ancient Romans was enclosed in this circle. It was by reason of the energetic precision of their mental constitution that they surpassed all who had preceded them. The Greeks wrought for glory, the Romans for empire. They desired not so much the admiration as the obedience of men. They used letters as a power. The remembrance of public affairs (*res publica*) is impressed on their finest works, as the name of the senate and the people on their monuments. By the majesty of Cicero's harangues, we recognize a speech which is mistress in the affairs of the world; the poetry of Virgil is never detached from the political cause which it has embraced: art has something to do beside charming; it must be of use. There was then at Rome in literature as in society, a secular tradition, of which Italy was the organ, in the middle portion through Latium, in the South by the Hellenic colonies of Magna Græcia, and in the North by the Asiatic colonies of Etruria; so that all the labors of the past had there found their goal, and all the civilized peoples of the earth seemed to have put their hands to the work of forming their masters.

Now, the three chief things constituting Roman civilization, namely, religion, laws, and letters, were bordering on their decadence. We must follow them in their downward course, to learn if their destinies divide or run side by side, to know what was to be done away with and what retained.

The downfall of paganism was not at all what we have been accustomed to think it. The ancient religion did not disappear rapidly to make way for the Gospel. Notwithstanding the scoffs of philosophers, the multitude were slow in deserting its altars; the advent of the emperors gave to it a species of restoration; minds were led back to it by the lassitude of doubt or the uneasiness of remorse. Its strength was renewed by the introduction of the foreign worships of Serapis and Mithras. But these borrowed religions only brought to it a more learned error; they abolished neither impure observances nor bloody rites. Paganism did not then reform itself as if to meet the truth half way; it disputed the ground to the very end. The last traces were long preserved, and that which thus remained was an obstacle and not a help for the future.

Not thus, however, did legislation fare. At first it seemed as if the entire Roman edifice were about to crumble. The emperor, who, under this military title was merely the head of the plebeians, completed the destruction of the patrician city, long shaken in its sacerdotal and military constitution. The city perished, and with it disappeared, little by little, its pitiless laws and the jealous solemnities with which it surrounded civil acts. But, meantime, the empire was in course of establishment. The provinces developed under a common administration; their usages, collected and codified by the jurisconsults, formed a public or national law, which was put forward to oppose the rigor of the old civil law, and which gave new foundations to the family, to property, and to justice. It was this public law, that is to say, the law which the world had made for itself through the medium of Rome, which was preserved in the compilations of Justinian to become the basis of future societies. All Europe is founded on this inheritance.

The destiny of letters is similar to that of laws. At first, they are seen to decline rapidly. A time came when, the processes of art absorbing the mind, the care for the form carried away the thought, and began to lower its flight. That moment was decisive. An arrogant reaction set in against the great writers of the preceding age. The illusion of false theories, the glitter of declamatory exercises and of public lectures, completed the aberrations of eloquence and of poetry. Inspiration, which gives life, retreated; and with it, style, which is the light by which we see the thought. And yet, this is the very period when Latin literature laid hold on the future. Rome then achieved two memorable acts for the diffusion and the preservation of human learning.

First, as she saw that she had received from the Eastern nations all she could expect from them, Rome turned toward the West. She there found rude manners and undisciplined minds; she undertook to lift these to her own level. During the long period when her conquests seemed to have come to an end, she subjugated the earth a second time, and even more completely, by her language and her institutions. The propagating movement may be followed. We see letters start from the North of Italy, and spread by way of Roman Gaul into Spain, where they raised up the brilliant generation of the two Senecas, Lucan, Quintilian, and Martial. They afterwards passed into Africa, in the time of Cornutus, Fronto, and Apuleius, to return to Gaul, and even to Treves on the confines of Germany, with the panegyrists, with Ausonius, Rutilius, and Sidonius Apollinaris. Thus did foreigners obtain citizenship in the republic of letters as well as in the state. Rome was not ignorant of the danger of this invasion; she was aware of what she must lose in elegance and nobility, in thus consorting with the sons of barbarians. Her glory consists in not having been repelled by the sight of them. She naturalized them, civilized them; she pursued at her own risk and peril the education of the writers and the nationalities. This was not simply the course of events; it was a benefit understood and intended. Pliny pronounced upon Italy this remarkable eulogium, that "The gods seem to have chosen her to give to the world a serener sky, to unite all empires, to bring together discordant tongues, and to restore to man, *humanity.*" And Tertullian, going a step farther, coined a new word, an eloquent barbarism, to express that universal culture which was spread abroad from the British Islands to the extremities of Hungary; he called it, *Romanitas.*

At the same time, and that the widening circle might have a centre, a new power, unknown to preceding ages, was in progress of establishment: *public instruction.* Egypt had its initiations, surrounded by mystery; at Athens, the care of literary instruction was left to the good will or the cupidity of the learned. In Italy, the land of discipline, teaching was to become a magistracy.

Cæsar sanctioned it by surrounding it with immunities and privileges; Vespasian assigned a public salary for the maintenance of masters of belles-lettres. Then arose those celebrated schools of the Capitol, to which order and prosperity were insured by imperial legislation, and which, under the reign of Valentinian III., counted thirty professors, surrounded by innumerable pupils. Two instructors taught philosophy and jurisprudence: there were three Latin rhetoricians, five Greek sophists, ten Greek and ten Latin grammarians. Twenty-nine libraries held the learned treasures of antiquity. Similar foundations were multiplied throughout Italy, and a constitution of Antoninus Pius extended them to the cities of the provinces. At the sight of these potent means, one is at first surprised at the mediocrity of the results. One naturally looks with disdain upon schools which follow ages of greatness, and whence issue only obscure generations. In vain did Quintilian, in his "Institutes of the Orator," undertake the education of the eloquent man. He was not permitted actually to see the ideal orator whom he so solicitously endeavored to form. However, let us beware of too rash a judgment: those grammarians, artificers in words, who passed their days in controversies regarding syntax, were watching over the preservation of one of the most beautiful languages in the world. Those scholiasts, whose persistent commentaries seem to fasten like canker-worms on the writings of poets and prose-authors, will yet, in the discussion of every syllable, maintain the correctness of the texts, throw light upon obscure passages, and preserve the remembrance of usages that have passed away. To them do we owe the boon of being able to read intelligently the works of the great men, their masters and ours. Macrobius, Servius, Terentianus Maurus, Martianus Capella, by gathering together the learning of their time, became the teachers of the Middle Ages. Wait a few hundred years, and from those very schools which seem to you so useless, will come forth disciples beyond their utmost hopes; from them are to issue the radiant figures of Dante and Petrarch. In this, as in so many other cases, it is found that man has been working for a future other than the near one in his thoughts. He does otherwise than he intends to do, often, much more than he dreams of; and when his work is completed, we cannot refrain from admiring the all-powerful will that worked with him. Now, this obscure labor which preserved to us classic letters, this teaching, which had its focus in Italy, and its rays everywhere, is what I mean by *tradition.* Tradition thus gave shelter to art, that the period of storms might be safely traversed, as the ark, on the eve of the deluge, gathered the living creatures within its hold. The ark was but a darksome refuge, poor and narrow, and yet all the nobler part of nature found shelter there. Similarly, the tradition of letters seems reduced to the meagre scaffolding of scholastic glosses and grammatical rules; and yet it holds within its bounds all the great literary epochs of Europe. Where we have been accustomed to see only a decadence, we must recognize a starting-point.

II.

But while letters were to be saved, pagan society was to end by a dissolution relaxing successively all its thews. That was the period when the Christian Church began its work in Rome. Between these two inimical societies, an abyss existed; how was the human mind to bridge it? How should Christianity enter into letters, and letters into Christianity? Here the question presents itself in all its difficulty. And it is here that we must endeavor to grasp the secret bonds by which the ages are knitted together.

First, the Gospel penetrated into Roman civilization by a latent influence which has not been sufficiently considered. We must look closely at that interior and communicative power which was exerted upon the pagans themselves: we must go down, so to speak, into the moral catacombs, hollowed out beneath the soil of paganism, in order that the final upheaval might be wrought. We may follow the traces of the Apostolic preaching into the palace of the Cæsars, and we may watch the regenerative thought slowly spreading by the current of opinions, even into the laws and into literature. Thus, at the end of the reign of Claudius, we suddenly meet with two decisions, one of which modifies the right of life and death held by masters, and the other emancipates women from the perpetual tutelage exercised by their kindred. And these two acts, subversive of the whole public economy of the Romans, contrary to all previous efforts of jurisprudence, to the entire tendency of manners, are found, by a singular coincidence, at the very moment of the propagation of the new faith which frees the slave through the power of conscience, and woman by virginity. The hidden action of Christianity shows itself especially in literature, as, for example, when we come to investigate the celebrated question of the relations of St. Paul with Seneca. We soon recognize the profound difference existing between the stoicism of the Greeks, of which the basis was wholly pagan, and the views of the Roman stoic, who re-establishes the relations between God and man, through grace and love. Thus in the presence of the new dogma, a silent reform had been wrought in the system of the stoics. This better doctrine, adopted by Seneca, recognizable in Epictetus, was to come to the throne with Marcus Aurelius, and to give to the empire its last fair days. So that the Gospel, accused of the decadence of Rome, on the contrary, really delayed the course of events. While pagans were burning Christians in the gardens of Nero, the torches of those festivals were already enlightening the world. [1]

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[1] A decree of the senate under Claudius abolishes the tutelage of the relatives over women who have reached a twelve-year-old majority. An-

The celebrated thesis of the relations existing between Seneca and St. Paul has been so compromised by incompetent criticism that one can no longer refer to the subject without adducing the proofs. The strongest, that which has been the most neglected, and which appears to us decisive, is the distinction between the two stoicisms; on the one side that of Zeno, Chrysippus, and Cleanthes, whose metaphysics teaches the absolute unity of nature, the divinity of the world, the future absorption and annihilation of the soul in the divine essence, the sum of all things enclosed in a fatal circle of successive destructions and creations; finally, the exaltation of the human being so far as to make him a portion of the divinity; this last is a pagan doctrine very similar to that of the Indian Vedanta. On the other hand, we find the esoteric doctrine of Seneca, who distinguishes between the divine and the human personalities, God acting as a father, and *preventing* by His assistance man who corresponds by love; add to this the combat between the spirit and the flesh, immortality, moral freedom, and the precept of universal brotherhood. These doctrines are not inferred from obscure illusions contained in the public writings of the philosopher; they are found in his most intimate correspondence; they fill entire epistles; see especially letters 41, 42, 95, 102, 120. If, besides, such doctrines cannot be attributed to the personal ele-

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other frees slaves abandoned by their masters on account of sickness or old age. See M. Troplong's *Memoire*, analyzed in the *Comptes rendus de l'Academie des sciences morales et politiques.*

vation of character of a man dishonored by so many weaknesses, one naturally thinks of the circumstances that might have brought him in contact with the teaching of St. Paul. These are indicated in the excellent *Memoire* of M. Greppo; the preaching of St. Paul at the Areopagus, his discussions with the Athenian stoics, his appearance at Corinth before the pro-consul Annaeus Gallio, a brother of Seneca's, and his arrival at Rome, where he was placed in the custody of Afranius Burrhus, prefect of the prætorium. Since the above was written, I have seen the question of the relations between St. Paul and Seneca treated with much power and ingenuity in the "Césars," by M. de Champagny.

In the second place, if we study Christianity in itself, amid all the obscurity of these first two centuries we find it already in the full possession of its spiritual power: it bears within it all that it is to bring forth. The Church is but just born, and yet it has its hierarchy crowned by the papacy, its liturgy consecrated by the Eucharistic sacrifice. In the representations of sacred persons and things in the catacombs, we see the beginnings of the traditional types of Christian art; later, the tombs of the martyrs will rise to the light of day, and the basilicas that cover them will lift to the very heavens their triumphant cupolas. The sacred scriptures open a well-spring, previously unknown, wherein letters are to be renewed. The *Acts of the Martyrs* are the beginnings of modern history, and in the allegorical "Visions of Hermas" we recognize a new-born poetry, the first example of the books of visions so numerous in the Middle Ages, books that will finally inspire the Divine Comedy.

Thirdly, the Christian religion, notwithstanding its radical newness, did not abjure the old civilization which it had come to regenerate. One must not here look to see a desperate conspiracy, a deliberate revolt, the facile heroism of enmity. The men who were given to the lions did not deny their Roman fatherland; they believed in its destinies, they looked upon the empire as the sole bond which hindered the world from falling asunder, and they asked of God its preservation. The arts lent them antique forms for the expression of their thoughts; their sepulchral paintings still recall the methods of pagan artists; in them, the figure of Orpheus, by a bold symbol, represents Christ drawing hearts to Himself. At the same time, the first Fathers of the Church recognize the services of reason; they find in the doctrines of the philosophers the scattered traces of an incomplete truth, something like a far-away participation in the Eternal Word. Several disciples of Plato receive baptism without laying aside the philosopher's cloak. One of them, St. Justin, opens at Rome the first school of orthodox philosophy; he closes its doors, after a lapse of twenty-five years, only to seal with his blood the alliance thenceforth concluded between science and faith. Thus, in the very times of the persecutions, Christianity, already the ruler of the future, of which it contains all the germs, binds to it the past, whether by the secret ascendancy which it exercises, or by the voluntary acceptance of the entire legitimate inheritance of the human mind.

The conversion of Constantine hastened the course of events; he did not press them at once to their final conclusion. We must not think that the Cæsars, when they became neophytes, carried the world with them: idolatry resisted; however, it substituted apologies in the place of tortures, and the struggle became a discussion. At the same period began the quarrel of Arianism. These two questions were agitated, not in an obscure corner of the world, but in the cities of the East, in Greece, and in the full daylight of Italy. All Rome was stirred at the prospect of the re-establishment of the altar of victory; heresy deemed itself sovereign at the Council of Rimini. The fate of the human race was the question in dispute; a fruitful perplexity stirred the human mind to its very depths; and in the furrow thus formed, sprang up a new science, Theology. In its turn, literature ended by following the other powers of the world: it became Christian, not without hesitations, not without profanations, not without sundry vicissitudes. The rhetoricians entered the Church; those were the days of Lactantius, of Victorinus, and of the most glorious of the deserters from the schools, St. Augustine. Africa asserted her claim to him. Rome could not retain St. Jerome. But there remained to the Italians, St. Ambrose; and this fact suffices to mark the moment when in the same hands were united the two inheritances of human and divine letters.

It was said that, like Plato, St. Ambrose had been visited in his cradle by bees, which had left their honey upon his lips. A young orator, brought up in the Roman schools, he had appeared with extraordinary applause in the courts of Milan. He still wore the purple-bordered robe of the magistrate when he was proclaimed bishop by the inspiration of the people. We cannot be astonished if the habits of secular eloquence appear in his discourses, if he remembers Cicero even when contending with him, if he writes hymns in the metres of Horace. The old national genius is still keeping watch with him when he saves the peace of the empire, when his words hold the tyrant Maximus in Treves, and when his letters stop on the Danubian frontier the conquering bands of the Marcomanni. Meanwhile the grace of the episcopate urges him onward and leaves him no repose; he takes part in all the controversies, all the dangers of his times. Symmachus and the deputies from the senate, when they ask for the restoration of their idols, find him on their way; and when the Arian Emprèss's satellites seek to force the gates of the temple, he is found standing upon the threshold. Thus, all has its place in this great mind, and the same heart that led him to reproach Theodosius with the massacre of Thessalonica, will induce him to sell the sacred vessels for the ransom of captives, and to shed abundant tears, weeping the death of a brother, or the fall of a sin-stricken virgin.

Two other writers must detain us yet a moment. St. Paulinus, a disciple of the poet Ausonius, deserted the pagan muses and his rich possessions in Aquitaine, to pass his life in the shelter of the tomb of St. Felix of Nola. His pensive piety loved the beautiful sky of Campania, the devotions to a favored saint, pilgrimages frequented by a population that returned from them to lead better lives. But sacred literature followed him into his retreat; a few chosen souls shared it, and a lively correspondence kept up his relations with the most illustrious persons. One cannot deny him a share in the intellectual destinies of Italy, and in the affairs of christendom.

Later, when the days of Rome were nearing their end, St. Leo the Great seemed to hold them back. This pontiff was called the Christian Demosthenes; in the pulpit, he recalled St. Paul, and in the pontifical chair, St. Peter. Italy had nothing stronger to oppose to the invasion of Attila. Three hundred thousand barbarians stopped at the passage of the Mincio, in the presence of the aged priest. A few years later, within the walls of Rome, he assuaged the fury of Genseric, obtaining from him the lives of the citizens and the preservation of buildings. We shall never know how much courage and genius have been required to preserve until the present day, all that remain of the stones of that city on which was let loose the vengeance of the whole world.

Thus the Church struggled against paganism and heresy, that minds might be set free, and at the same time kept back the barbarians, and prolonged the existence of the old civilization. The bishops relieved the weary legions of the care of the Empire. In the period of terror which preceded the fall of the Western throne, each year of delay was a benefit. Morals and manners. law and literature, needed time to prepare for themselves places of refuge. With the bishoprics, centres of study were multiplied throughout Italy. Then must have commenced the parochial schools, mentioned in 529 (A. D.) by the Council of Vaison. Secular instruction had yielded to the influence of the general law, and the tradition of letters was thenceforth Christian. Yet it forsook neither its patriotic memories nor its devotion to great models. All the energy of the Roman accent was renewed in the songs of the poet Prudentius, when he placed on the lips of the martyr, St. Lawrence, the following hymn: "O Christ! name like to no other under the sun, splendor and virtue of the Father, author of heaven, founder of these walls! Thou placedst Rome as a sovereign at the summit of earthly things, willing that the world should serve the people who bear the steel and wear the toga. Behold how the whole human race has passed under the law of Remus. Hostile ways of life draw near to one another, and are blended together in thought and in word. O Christ! grant to Thy Romans that their city may be Christian, that city by which Thou hast given one and the same faith to all the cities of the earth. All the provinces are united in one creed; the world has yielded; may the imperial city yield in its turn! may Romulus be faithful, and Numa believe in Thee!"

III.

The invasion of the barbarians opens a third period when the succession of human things seems to be interrupted. Seven times in less than two centuries (404–557), did the northern hordes desolate Italy. They followed one another so closely that five generations were subjected to these terrors, and passed away, bearing with them that uncertainty regarding the future which destroys the power of laboring for it. As hope died, so were memories blotted out. The antique world there ends, and there begins the modern world: it is a birth on the day following a death, and, in the darksome hour which separates the two, all transition disappears.

However, amid these armed irruptions of which the disastrous effects cannot be denied, we may call to mind another fact not less considerable. I mean the *pacific arrival* of vast numbers of barbarians within the Roman empire After Cæsar had led the

Germans at Pharsalia, they gradually filled the army as mercenaries, country places as colonists, a variety of offices as citizens, until finally, when they had become consuls, patricians, prefects of the prætorium, sons-in-law to the emperors, they occupied so large a space that none was left for their masters. These strangers, half Romans, placed between the old inhabitants of Italy and its new conquerors, prevented a shock which must otherwise have reduced everything to dust and ashes; their regular domination smoothed the passage from liberty to violence and oppression.

The two facts which we have just indicated, the pacific entrance and the violent invasion, characterize, in Italy, the successive conquests of the Goths and the Lombards.

And here we pause to recognize the reparative mission of Theodoric. His arrival in Italy was at first a legal reclamation, exercised against the Heruli, in the name of the Cæsar of Byzantium; then, a peaceable taking possession, consented to by the senate and acquiesced in by the people. His benefactions restored the walls of the cities, their aqueducts, their amphitheatres, and the still more precious ruins of their liberties. The hierarchy of titles, of offices, and of magistracies, preserved its prestige; the laws regained their power. This leader of Germanic bands, who could sign his name only by means of a perforated plate of gold, did himself honor in wearing the purple; he gave a Roman code of laws to his disarmed warriors, surrounded himself with secretaries, quæstors, and counts (*comites*), and discoursed with them concerning maxims of philosophy, the courses of the stars, the nature of rivers and seas. Rome lent to him her auspices, and he seemed to meditate the formation of a new Empire of the West, thus antedating by three centuries the work of Charlemagne. A general alliance was formed among the Germanic nations, under the patronage of the Gothic race, which then held the finest provinces of Europe. Thus was contact with Latin science and customs civilizing a people who spoke an admirable language, and whose heroic memories were in themselves an epic poem. Who would not have predicted for this race a long historical destiny? The dawn of a rising civilization began to break from the shores of the Adriatic to the pillars of Hercules. And yet, the monarchy of the Goths in Italy lasted only sixty-nine years. The decisive cause of its ruin will not, I think, be hard to find. The heresy of Arius, that impotent and disputatious doctrine, which lacked the courage to abide by the useful obscurities of faith, which loved the shadow of the throne and the protection of empresses and eunuchs, did not possess the strength needed to uphold a new society: it failed, and the new order of things fell from its grasp.

In connection with Theodoric, appear two men to whom letters owe much, Bœthius and Cassiodorus.

Bœthius still belongs to the past. Descended from the families of Anicius and Manlius, he united in his house all the memorials of the old patrician, all the honors of the republic. We see him on a certain day pass from the senate to the circus, and there, between his two sons, consuls, surrounded by lictors, distribute the largesses of the prince to the assembled people, who fancy themselves back in the times of the Cæsars, once more enjoying bread and games (*panem et circenses*). During his infrequent leisure moments he visited in thought the schools of Greece; his translations of Artistotle, and of the commentators of Artistotle, embraced the entire system of the Peripatetics: thence, and especially from a passage in his version of Porphyry, was one day to issue, with the controversy between the realists and the nominalists, the whole scholastic philosophy. On the other hand, his "Treatise on Consolation," destined to achieve great popularity, and betimes translated into many tongues, was to introduce to the Middle Ages the ideas of Plato, regenerated by Christian mysticism. The *science* of antiquity received in his person the baptism of blood. He died a martyr. To this day, the people of Pavia kneel at his tomb, and the peasants of the valley of Chiavenna point out to the traveller the tower of Bœthius.

Cassiodorus fulfils another destiny: he stands nearer to the barbarians, nearer to the future. We meet him in the court of the conquerors, the historian of their exploits, the panegyrist of their reigns, in fine, the minister of Theodoric, of Amalasuntha, of Athalaric, of Theodatus, always employing their power to save whatever remained of enlightenment. The rescripts of the princes, drawn up by him, salute Rome with the imposing titles of *City of Letters*, *Mother of Eloquence*, *Temple of Virtue*. Through him the senate received the order to re-establish the public salary of the grammarians and rhetoricians. This man lived through one entire period of history. He buried the Gothic dynasty which he had inaugurated. But when the authority of kings escaped his grasp, he made for himself another and more lasting domination. Amid the wars of Belisarius and Totila, he sought shelter for his Latin penates beneath a Christian roof: he founded a monastery in his retreat at Vivaria; he enriched it with books, and peopled it with laborious monks,—copyists, translators, and compilers. He himself set the example; after having in his *Institutions, Divine and Human*, traced for them an encyclopædia of contemporaneous learning, he thought of the less favored posterity which was to follow, and, at the age of ninety-three, penned a treatise on orthography.

These admirable lives were not wasted in solitary efforts. The restored schools of the Capitol attracted a large number of strangers. An active correspondence united the literary men of Italy with those of Gaul; the orations of Ennodius shook the forum of Milan. And when the deacon, Arator, read in public the Acts of the Apostles versified, the clergy and people of Rome, assembled to hear him, filled during three days the church of St. Peter *in vinculis.*

Other days began with the conquest of the Lombards. "That cruel nation, as a sword that had leaped from its scabbard, mowed down its harvest of the human race." Incendiary bands of Arians and idolaters fell upon the convents and the churches; the cities were sacked, the fields devastated, and wild beasts wandered in places previously inhabited by men. The ravagers went to the very walls of Rome to bear away citizens into slavery. Within, consternation reigned. Terror caused the disappearance of the magistracies, the senate, the people, all those great shadows of great things. Amid the universal dismay, the sovereign pontiff himself, interrupting the course of his homilies, left his pulpit because life had become burdensome to him. The Fathers, in a council at the Lateran, held in 680, confessed that none among them "claim to excel in profane eloquence, for the fury of many tribes has desolated these provinces, and, surrounded by barbarians, the servants of God, reduced to live by the labor of their hands, lead lives filled with care and anguish." It was during those two centuries of misery, when Italy, torn to pieces by the kings, the Lombard dukes, and the Byzantine exarchs, knew no repose, that amid the silence of thought and the crash of falling ruins, letters might have perished;—then or never.

They were saved by Monasticism and the Papacy. The genius of Italy, upheld by these two tutelary institutions, weathered the storm.

Monasticism had received its organization on the eve of the danger. The austerities of the Thebaid had long before found courageous imitators in the West; but these bands of cenobites were still awaiting a common law. Under the reign of the Goths and toward the year 500 (A. D.), certain shepherds of Subiaco, clearing away the brambles from the entrance to a neighboring cave wherein they thought they had seen a wild beast stirring, discovered a young man; soon, judging of him by the gentleness of his words, they took him for an angel. Benedictus was his name. Educated in the Roman schools, wearied with the sordidness of the care of terrestrial things, he had fled to the wilderness. Numerous penitents soon gathered under his direction. The cells of Monte Cassino rose upon the ruins of a temple of Apollo, the last refuge of paganism. Thence was it that the man of God was to send forth his disciples to the extremities of Sicily and of Gaul, the beginning of that beneficent invasion which was to overrun Christendom. It is said that one night, when his monks were asleep, and he watched alone in a tower of the monastery, as he looked forth upon the heavens he beheld around him a great brightness, and he saw the whole world illumined by a ray of sunlight. That ray of light was the Benedictine rule. It was humble and short; but it embraced labor, which subjugates the earth; prayer, which is mistress of heaven; and charity, which conquers men; it thus restored to humanity the empire of itself and of all things else. The rule provided for the maintenance of a conventual library, and soon usage joined to this the function of tuition. The charters deposited in the archives became the landmarks of the first chronicles. The legends of the saints threw athwart their pages the beams of a new poetry. From the time of the second generation, Monte Cassino had its history. From another quarter, and in the North of Italy, even amid the much-feared Lombards, the monastic colony of St. Columbanus (612) brought to Bobbio the learned traditions of Ireland. Thus was the sacred fire of letters kept up under the care of the austere virginity of the cloister. What is there astonishing in the fact that the monks preserved antiquity? They were themselves antiquity. They spoke its language, wore its garments, kept the form of its habitations. If it had been given to Pythagoras to return and visit the shores of his beloved Magna Græcia, when he beheld the pious republics founded by St. Benedict and considered their life in community, their silence, the grave, cloaked figures pacing the porticos, he might have thought he had come upon his own schools. And yet, the two institutions were divided from one another by the entire breadth of Christianity. These were the men who were to renew the face of Europe by faith, by learning, and by the cultivation of the soil. Detached from time, they were of all times; monks were to be eternal men.

About the same time (590–604), the Papacy attained to all its potency in the person of St. Gregory the Great, a heroic priest raised up to meet the perils of those evil days. Whilst the walls of Rome, shaken by continual assaults, threatened to fall upon him, his thoughts were at the ends of the earth; in the East, repelling the enterprises of the Byzantine court; in the North, converting the Anglo-Saxons; in the West, completing the overthrow of Arianism among the Visigoths of Spain. His discourses on the freeing of slaves, his reform of the Church Chant, and his writings, still held as among the bases of theological instruction, accomplished much in the interest of future times. He has been accused of wishing to blot out the memory of the antique ages by the destruction of books, but no one now believes the solitary and equivocal testimony of John of Salisbury, who lived six hundred years later. That pontiff, who has been set down as inimical to letters, made the study of them obligatory for the priesthood; under his auspices, the most learned clerics mingled with the most pious monks. The son of a senator, he had himself held the office of prætor, and something of the old patrician always still clung to him. "None of those who served him," says the contemporary biographer, "had anything barbarous either in their language or in their dress. Latinity was there to be recognized whether under the trabea or the toga; it was a Latin palace, where Latin customs were retained." Bœthius has been called the last of the Romans; this name, which again others bestow upon Brutus, I should give to St. Gregory the Great, did I not see after him the character of the masters of the world reappear in some of those illustrious Popes of whom the procession will not be closed by Gregory VII. I do not see, the world has not yet seen, the last of the Romans.

Contemporary historians extol the learning of St. Martin, Leo II., Gregory III., and Zachary: their epistles stand in proof. Rome had not ceased to be the centre of affairs of all nations. She continued to stamp the she-wolf of Romulus upon her coin. The Papacy did not hand over to the barbarians the keys of the city. Learned ecclesiastics from England and from Asia met within her precincts. In 690, there came to Rome a monk of Tarsus, named Theodore, a pupil of the schools of Athens; this monk was destined to bear with him ancient literature to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. The teaching of grammar, that is to say, of literature, continued in the city; the Vatican library, meagre as it might be, sent Greek manuscripts of Aristotle to Pepin the Short. The basilicas were enriched with mosaics and paintings. The indefatigable activity of the human mind showed itself in the admirable controversies sustained by the theologians of Italy with the Monothelites and the Iconoclasts. But civilization was above all perpetuated by that which is its most faithful depository, namely, by the languages. The Roman Church bore to the northern nations the ancient idiom of the proconsuls, disputed with Constantinople in the language of St. John Chrysostom, and carefully gathered together the primitive texts of the Scriptures. In consecrating by solemn adoption Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, she saved whatever there was of most eminent in the past, the genius of Latium, of Greece, and of the Orient.

And thus likewise, tradition perished not. It was preserved in the Church, and hence in Christendom. Amid the obscurity which extends from the seventh to the eighth century, the human mind did not destroy its work of so many years. The Sovereign Artificer wrought in silence; or, if He seemed to slumber for a moment, the Church watched for Him, calling to our memory the legend of the pious artist, who, on awaking, found the interrupted picture of the preceding evening finished by unseen hands.

IV.

At length, by the blending together of the ancient civilization, of Christianity, and of the barbarians, a new society is formed. It is founded on the concord of the priesthood and the empire; it is developed even amid their discords: we must follow it until it finds its expression in a new literature.

The society of the Middle Ages was constituted on the day when Charlemagne, kneeling at the tomb of the holy apostles, received the crown from the hands of Leo III., while the assembled multitude cried out: "Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by God, the great and pacific emperor of the Romans!" Then was realized the idea of a universal monarchy, heir of the Cæsars, and consecrated by Christianity, which was to extend equally over both Latin and German nations, and which, to express this alliance of all the ages, was to be called the Holy Roman Empire. The great man well knew the extent of the rights subsisting beneath the folds of this purple, and, by a capitulary of 802 (A. D.), he required, in virtue of his imperial title, a new oath of fidelity from those who had done homage to him simply as king.

Charlemagne had found power in Italy; he there found learning also. When he visited Rome for the first time (774), the school children went out a mile beyond the walls to meet him: letters recognized their protector. They accompanied him throughout his entire progress; the capture of Pavia gave to him Paul the Deacon and Peter of Pisa; later, at Parma, he met Alcuin. The Popes supplied him with skilful masters in the seven arts, to the end that the study of grammar, calculation, and singing might be properly pursued in France. A Lombard cleric, named Theodulph. with no patronage save his knowledge of theology and his Latin verses, became bishop of Orleans (*missus dominicus*) and one of the grandees of the realm. Thus did learned men from the Peninsula emigrate beyond the Alps, in order to assist in that restoration of human knowledge which the great emperor had in his mind when he asked from Heaven twelve men like St. Jerome and St. Augustine that the face of the earth might be renewed.

Italy seemed exhausted by the effort she had made. Her southern provinces, divided between the Greeks and the dukes of Beneventum, and invaded by the Saracens, did not share in the beneficial unity of the empire. Soon, the decadence of the Carlovingian dynasty, the civil wars which ensued, the profanation of the Holy See, and the invasion of the Huns, proved a series of disasters equaling the horrors of the preceding age. During the long years that elapsed until the reign of Otho the Great, we are tempted to ask if antiquity has survived through such great labors, and if Christianity has grown by the fostering of such eminent genius, only to perish together through the evils of the times and the corruption of men.

However, upon closer inspection, we find light amid the chaos, and its indications are more numerous than during the preceding centuries. A law of Lothaire established schools in the nine principal cities, which schools proved so many centres of instruction for Tuscany, the Marches, Lombardy, and Friuli. In 826, A. D., a Roman council, held by Eugene II., decreed that in episcopal seats, and, when needful, in places depending on them, pains be taken to maintain masters for the teaching of letters, "seeing that such knowledge is especially useful in furthering the study of the Divine Law." This decree was renewed in 853. Some years later, when Louis II. visited Beneventum (870), there were there, according to the chronicler, thirty-two philosophers, of whom the most renowned was the, in truth, very little renowned, Hilderic. One author of these days groans over seeing poetry descend among the crowd. The demon of Latin verses possessed men even in country places:

Hoc faciunt urbi: hoc quoque ruri.

More useful labors consecrate the memory of Bertharius, abbot of Monte Cassino, of Bishop Hatto, and of Anastasius the Librarian, who extracted the annals of the papacy from the acts of the martyrs and the Church archives that they might take their place in history. When at length Otho the Great took up the interrupted projects of Charlemagne, it was again to Italy that he looked for the instruments of his designs. By his orders, Luitprand, bishop of Cremona, undertook the embassy to Constantinople, of which he has left us so remarkable an account. We see therein the old age of the Byzantine empire, obstinate in its haughty isolation, when indeed Europe had begun to need it no longer. Toward the same epoch, a cleric of Novara, called to the German court, stopped at the convent of St. Gall. Accompanied by a library of a hundred volumes, Greek and Latin, and prepared on numerous questions which he had laid out for discussion, he purposed to put to the proof and to astound the monks of the learned abbey. But, in the ardor of dispute, as he himself says: "betrayed by the custom of speaking the vulgar tongue," he let fall a solecism, to the great delight of the German Latinists. The ultramontane was satirized; the tale was noised abroad in all the monasteries. Gunzo deemed the occurrence worthy of an apology, and, in the letter in which he excuses his misfortune, we curiously enough, amid the display of classical erudition, come upon one of the first vestiges of modern Italian.

Otho II. gave back to Italy more than she had lent to him; he gave to the Holy See, Sylvester II., who re-opens the series of great popes. The times that were in preparation called for nothing mediocre.

When the quarrel broke out between the priesthood and the empire, the Cæsar was Henry IV., a scion of that Salic house whose violent domination threatened Germany with a return to barbarism. Of the traditions of the Roman monarchy, he knew nothing but the zeal for the interests of the public treasury; he represented rather the old German kingship, upheld by the power of the feudal system. The head of a military aristocracy, he held to it the bishops, by the bond of investiture, which made of the Church a fief, and the priests, by concubinage, which would have made of the priesthood a caste. Thus would these two orders, the nobility and the clergy, have pressed with all their weight upon Christian society. On the other side, the true imperial genius, the genius for government, which emancipates and enlightens, was at Rome in the counsels of the papacy, in the thoughts of Gregory VII. This Italian monk had inherited from the old Romans all the power of the law, *minus* arms, and *plus* faith. From the depths of the Lateran palace, where he was besieged, now by the seditious multitude, and now by the anathema of a schismatic conventicle, he made all the provinces of the West yield to the uniformity of the ecclesiastical law and conquered the obstinate resistance of Germany. When the German emperor went to Canossa and humbled himself before the pontiff, this was again the triumph of civilization over the barbarian world.

When thus guiding the destinies of the Church, Gregory VII. and his successors were serving the cause of letters; in many ways did they advance it.

And firstly, we do not subscribe to the common saying that the arts are born and flourish best in times of peace. If there are, as we have seen, wars of extermination, invasions and tyrannies which crush intelligences beneath the brutal reign of force, it is otherwise with those memorable contests which employ force in the service of great interests, and consequently, in that of great ideas. The human mind delights in struggles which call forth the discussion of great questions; it grows in the midst of perplexities; it needs the severe conditions without which nothing is productive, *suffering* and *sorrow*. The ages of Pericles and Augustus were the offspring of Salamis and Pharsalia. The dispute concerning investitures awoke scholasticism. Men were forced to choose between excommunication and the ban of the empire; hence, men were obliged to think. The triumph of the papacy gave rise to the crusades; like all civilizing wars, they were to be saluted with canticles.

In the second place, the popes, who made every effort to reform the clergy, did not neglect the potent aid of learning. They sought to insure the independence of the priesthood by conferring on it a possession which the feudal sceptre had no power to transmit,—enlightenment. They exalted the dignity of the priest by the enforcement of the law of celibacy; but, when depriving him of family joys, other consolations were to be found to give honor to his solitude; letters were seated at his hearthstone. The Roman council of 1078 reminded Christendom of the decrees which had instituted chairs for instruction in the liberal arts in connection with cathedral churches. This impulsion was decisive, and Italy sustained it by a glorious concurrence. Three men, Lanfranc, St. Anselm, and Peter Lombard, went to the north of Europe to inaugurate the revival of learning. Lanfranc gave to dialectics greater exactness, the writings of St. Anselm restored to metaphysics the vigor of its flight, while the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard lent to theology the excellent form which later seemed to be fixed forever in the *Summa* of St. Thomas. Their lessons aroused the spirit of philosophy in France; their disciples opened the great school, whither forty thousand students thronged from the four quarters of the world, where clashing opinions claimed armies of adherents, where finally, the entire learned life of the Middle Ages came into play with a freedom until then unknown.

In course of time, the Italian cities, united under the patronage of the sovereign pontificate against the oppression of the feudatory bishops and the imperial deputies, also engaged in the wars for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. Whilst the Lombard league avenged the ruins of Milan and dictated the peace of Constance, the ships of Pisa, of Venice, and of Genoa, returning from the East, brought the poetic breath of Asia in the folds of their sails. The victorious cities hastened to take possession of the soil by the erection of monuments which should bear witness to their sovereignty: the domes of St. Mark arose from the Adriatic. Other communities begin to set down their history at this page. The Senate of Genoa commands one of its consuls to write the annals of the republic; the chronicles of Lodi, of Como, and of Cremona, are drawn up. The old Roman municipalities, as they rebuild their walls, revive their laws; jurisprudence again flourishes in the schools of Mantua, Piacenza, Padua, and Modena.

These are the days that witness the commencement of the University of Bologna. The same movement is felt to the very ends of the Peninsula. The Normans in Sicily erect the gilded basilica of Montereale, and tell in verse the deeds of their kings. The interests of learning are bound up with those of the fatherland, art gathers inspiration from the people, and teaches them to understand its utterances; all that blooms has a new sap and deeper roots. We perceive those beginnings of organization and sensibility which are the signs of life: a new genius is on the eve of birth, his language must be prepared for him.

Between the classic language of the learned and the rustic dialects which were not written, Italy had at first a barbarous Latin, of which the first traces have been sought out in the comedies of Plautus and in the Christian inscriptions. It would be useful to follow, as M. Fauriel has done in learned lessons, the vicissitudes of that mobile language, modified by usage and by the exigencies of the times, which held sway in familiar preaching and in public acts, and which, during several centuries, sufficed for the wants of the human mind. On the other hand, Provençal poetry had penetrated into Lombardy under favor of the alliances binding together the nobility of the two regions. We early in the day see troubadours visiting the feudal courts of Montferrat, Este, Verona, and Malaspina. Bernard de Ventadour receives the crown of poetry in the cathedral of Bologna. At the same time, the

French language, introduced by the Norman conquest into the southern provinces, is retained, and becomes popular. It is the only language spoken at the court of Palermo down to the reign of William I. Into it are translated the Latin books which the lords of the land can no longer read in the original; Marco Polo makes use of it that the narrative of his adventures may reach the grandees. St. Francis asks alms in French at the doors of the Vatican basilica, and Sordello shows himself a skilful versifier, no less in *langue d'Oïl* than in *langue d'Oc.* So many examples finally emboldened that beautiful Italian tongue, which, two hundred years after its birth, had not yet dared to appear in the world of letters. The thirteenth century was ushered in by songs of a harmony until then unknown. The freemen of Florence and of Siena exchanged love verses with the Sicilian courtiers of Frederic II., while amid the Umbrian hills was heard the canticle of St. Francis of Assisi. The people were amazed that they could comprehend. From the banks of the Arno to the Pharos of Messina, the voices were repeated as if by so many echoes; they recognized each other as speaking one and the same language, and human thought possessed in the world one admirable instrument the more.

And here ends this study; for at this stage we already see Ricordano Malespini gathering together the documents for the first history written in popular prose; Brunetto Latini pens the first long poem in the common tongue; and these are the friends and the teachers of Dante. This last name warns us that antiquity is not destroyed, but that modern times have begun.

V.

Thus, letters never perished. And thus, the period of complete barbarism, which was first presumed to extend over a term of a thousand years, from the fall of the Roman empire to the taking of Constantinople, and which was gradually reduced until it was held to cover only the seventh and the tenth centuries, vanishes before a closer examination. Barbarism might usurp, it never ruled exclusively. A continual protest preserved the rights of learning. I do not find the universal ignorance deplored by contemporary writers; and, for the very reason that many deplore it so eloquently, I fail to believe in it. The human intellect has had this honor, that the ruin of the ancient world and the irruption of invading hordes have not been able to prevail against it. Providence, in whose counsels nothing is insignificant, watched over the destiny of art as well as over the mutations of the nations. The world was never left without some luminous centre whereat it might re-light its torches. Only times which have faith neither in God nor in man, only impious ages, believe in an eternal night.

Impiaque æternam timuerunt sæcula noctem.

This point solidly established will serve to bring out a literary doctrine long unrecognized, which doctrine is, that two things are necessary for the perfecting of art: on one side the freedom of inspiration which comes and goes, differing according to times and places; on the other, the authority of tradition, which is continued in instruction, in criticism, and in the learned languages. On one hand, genius; on the other, labor. Genius is a gift, and the few periods which really possess it attain their glory only through the austere discipline of labor, through a long apprenticeship under tuition. Labor is a law: courageously pursued, there is no time so miserable that it cannot derive honor from it. Careful work may even console society for temporary absence of genius, since labor facilitates the re-appearance of genius by holding for it the place it has left.

Thus it is that we may trace in history the course of learning, even as Bossuet there traced the course of religion and of empire. The law of labor is also the law of the hereditary succession which it preserves, and of the progress which it prepares. Knowledge can advance only by staying itself upon acquired certainties; the arts are illumined only by the light afforded by great models. Amid the inexhaustible variety of his works, we see the mind of man pursue one and the same end, seeking beauty, truth, justice. We find a design traced on high which is carried out here below by a series of laborers. And thus again is demonstrated the unity, the solidarity of the human race, a Christian dogma, toward which now tend all the conclusions of science.

The continuity between pagan antiquity and Christian times, which appeared to be interrupted, was really preserved in Italy. That beautiful country, situated on the Mediterranean, the centre of communication of the various parts of the world, subjected to vicissitudes which never allowed it to constitute one distinct nation, truly seems destined to some nobler function in the interest of the whole of mankind. Italy is the organ of Rome, and Rome is the immortal depository of the political, literary, and religious tradition of the world. She educated those western peoples, long known as the Latin races, who, imbued with the Latin faith, Latin law, and the Latin language, have everywhere left their ineffaceable imprint. Our entire civilization is moulded by Rome. Thus do the destinies of the whole of humanity rest upon that mysterious city, and we must say with the great writer whom we are about to study: "No farther proof is needed to show that an especial providence of God has presided over the birth and the greatness of this holy city; and I am firmly persuaded that the stones of its walls are entitled to respect, and the ground on which it stands is worthy of veneration beyond anything that men have said or believed."

It is because he understood the destiny of Italy that Dante became the national poet, and at the same time the poet of Christendom. While inspiration never descended upon more eloquent lips, never did tradition find a more faithful heir. Dante, great as he was for having dared so much, was perhaps still greater by reason of having known so much. During six hundred years commentators have not ceased to study the Divine Comedy, and consequently to learn from its pages. It has been treated as we treat the Iliad and the Æneid; and I wonder neither at the admiration nor at the persevering labor bestowed upon it. There is, in fact, an inexhaustible subject of study in the great epics of Homer, of Virgil, and of Dante, for the reason that they represent three momentous eras in the history of the world: Greek antiquity in its budding, the destiny of Rome binding the old times with the new, and the Middle Age which touches upon our own day. It is this which makes at the present moment the popularity of the Divine Comedy, and assures to it, not a passing favor, not a triumph of reaction, as some say, but a serious attraction, a permanent authority. What we look for in it is history—the genius of the thirteenth century, the genius of the troubadours, of the Italian republics, of the theological school, of St. Thomas Aquinas. This it is that holds an innumerable auditory at the feet of the old poet. When I behold this multitude of readers, interpreters, and imitators, Dante seems to me well avenged. To the exile, who had not where to lay his head, who experienced how bitter is the bread of the stranger, and how hard it is to ascend and descend the stairways of other men, flock a crowd of the obscure or the illustrious, asking the bread of the word, and, in his turn, he will make all generations of men of letters ascend and descend by his stairways, by the steps of his Inferno, his Purgatorio, his Paradiso. And we, we also are his people; hence we shall not consider wasted the time we may devote to the doing of something in his service, and consequently in the furtherance of the great cause which he served—the cause of religion, liberty, and letters.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the pilgrimage to Rome, so often dreamed of, is finally realized, and the traveller, impelled by a pious curiosity, has ascended the great staircase of the Vatican, and has surveyed the wonders of every age and of every country gathered together under favor of the hospitality of that magnificent residence, he reaches a spot that may fitly be called the sanctuary of Christian art, the *Stanze* of Raphael. The artist, in a series of historical and symbolic frescos, has there depicted the glories and the benefactions of the Catholic faith. Among those frescos is one on which the eye rests most lovingly, both by reason of the beauty of the subject and the felicity of the execution. The Holy Eucharist is there represented on an altar lifted up between heaven and earth; heaven opens, and amid its splendor permits us to see the Divine Trinity, the angels, and the saints; the earth beneath is crowned by a numerous assemblage of pontiffs and doctors of the Church. In one of the groups composing the assemblage, the spectator distinguishes a figure remarkable by the originality of its character, its head encircled, not by a tiara or a mitre, but by a wreath of laurel. The countenance is noble and austere, nowise unworthy of such company. A momentary glance into the memory brings to mind Dante Alighieri.

The question then naturally rises, by what right has the portrait of such a man been introduced among those of the venerated witnesses of the faith, and that by an artist accustomed to the scrupulous observance of liturgical traditions, under the eyes of the popes, in the very citadel of orthodoxy?

The reply to the question is inferred at sight of the almost religious honors paid by Italy to the memory of the man, honors which announce him to have been something more than a great poet. The shepherds of Aquileia still show on the bank of the Tolmino a rock which they call *Dante's seat*, where he often came to meditate on the thoughts suggested by exile. The dwellers in Verona delight in pointing out the church of St. Helen, where, as a traveller, he tarried to sustain a public thesis. In a monastery of Camaldolesi, shadowed by the wild hills of Gubbio, a carefully-preserved bust recalls the fact that he there found several months of solitude and repose.[1] Ravenna, nobly jealous, keeps his ashes. But Florence, especially, has surrounded with expiatory honors all that remains to her of him: the roof which sheltered his head, the stone whereon he was accustomed to sit. She has even awarded to him a species of apotheosis, by making Giotto represent him, clad in triumphal robes and with crowned head, under one of the porticos of the metropolitan church, almost among the patron saints of the city.

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[1] Pelli, *Memorie per la vita di Dante*, at the end of the "Works of Dante," Zatta's edition.—*Amori di Dante*, by F. Arrivabene.

Monuments of another kind afford a still more explicit testimony. Such are the public chairs founded in the fourteenth century at Florence, Pisa, Piacenza, Venice, and Bologna, for the interpretation of the Divine Comedy: and such also are the commentaries on the poem which occupied the time of the gravest persons, as for example, the Archbishop of Milan, Visconti, who employed for this work two citizens of Florence, two theologians, and two philosophers; or the bishop, John of Serravalle, who devoted to a like labor his leisure hours when attending the Council of Constance.[1] The finest minds of Italy bow reverently before this elder brother: Boccaccio, Villani, Marsilius Ficinus, Paulus Jovius, Varchi, Gravina, Tiraboschi, have all greeted Dante with the title of philosopher. The unanimous opinion of his day, formulated in a line which has become proverbial, proclaimed him as both a doctor of divine verities and a sage who permitted nothing human to escape him:

Theologus Dantes, nullius dogmatis expers.[2]

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[1] Foscolo, Edinburg Review, v. XXIX. Tirabo chi, History, vol. V.

[2] See the epitaph composed by Giov. del Virgilio.—Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante.* Giov. Villani, History, Bk. IX. Marsilius Ficinus, *Epist.* Inter *Clarorum Virorum Epist.*, Romæ, 1754. Paulus Jovius, *Elog.*, c. iv. p. 19. Varchi, *Ercolano.* Gravina, *della Ragion poetica.*

These friendly voices found echoes beyond the Alps. One of the first French translators of the Divine Comedy thus expresses himself in the dedication of his work to Henry IV.: "Sire, I do not fear to affirm that this sublime poem ought by no means to be placed with sundry compositions that the divine Plato compares to the garden-plots of the beautiful Adonis, which, springing up in a single day, fade away and die as rapidly. In this noble poem we find an excellent poet, a profound philosopher, and a judicious theologian."[1] German criticism has pronounced a similar verdict. Brucker recognizes Dante as "the first among the moderns with whom the Platonic muses, after seven hundred years of exile, found an asylum; a thinker equal to the most renowned of his contemporaries, a sage who deserved to be numbered among the reformers of philosophy."[2]

But such is among us, perishable creatures that we are, the fragility of memory and the short reach of glory, that ordinarily after a few centuries, little remains to us but the mere name of those who have most honored humanity. Such names often attain immortality through the action of a traditional but ignorant admiration, like to the legendary dolphin which bore over the waves indifferently a mocking animal or an inspired poet. If these indolent courtesies of posterity sometimes profit persons of little worth.

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[1] Dedication of the Abbe Grangier's translation.

[2] Brucker, *Hist. critic. philos.*, Period 3, Part I., Bk. I., Ch. I. See also F. Schlegel, History of Literature, Book II., Chap. I.

more often they wrong great men. It appears as if due justice had been rendered to such men, because, on occasion, they receive a tribute of common praise, while in fact their most precious titles to honor remain buried in the dust. So that, if they could suddenly rise from their graves, we do not know which feeling would most affect them, indignation at being misknown, or pride at being so surrounded by homage, even when so little really understood.

Dante has passed through the experience of these strange vicissitudes of human glory. The work of so many vigils and of such loving care, to which he devoted his life and by which he conquered death, the Divine Comedy, has, after the lapse of six hundred years, come down to us, but with the loss of a portion of its philosophic interest, that is to say, with the loss of that part of it which the author esteemed the most highly.

Among those who are called cultivated persons, many know, of the entire poem, only the Inferno, and of the Inferno, only the inscription on the entrance, the episode of Francesca da Rimini, and the death of Ugolino. The singer of the resignedly-borne pains of Purgatory, the narrator of the triumphant visions of Paradise, seems to them but a sinister apparition, one bugbear the more amid the fabled darkness of the thirteenth century, already peopled by so many phantoms. Others, more highly instructed, have not been more just: Thus Voltaire sees in the Divine Comedy merely "an odd work, yet resplendent with natural beauties, wherein the author lifts himself, in the details, above the bad taste of his age and his subject." [1] If the critics of our own day have approached the reading of the poem with more serious dispositions, some have found in it only the record of a piously romantic passion, and others a political manifesto written under the dictation of revenge. For both these classes, the numerous passages relating to dogma are nothing but the parasitic vegetation of a too fertile mind, in fact, the ill weeds of that contemporary learning which struck root everywhere.[2] Finally, the historians of philosophy, while allowing all that pertains to it in this vast composition, have contented themselves with announcing the thesis, without entering into the controversy, thus leading us to think that they have underestimated the importance of the result. And yet it was to them, it was to meditative minds, free from the contagion of error, that the old poet appealed, when, interrupting his narrative, he thought with sadness upon those who would not comprehend him, and cried out with a nobly suppliant voice:

> "O ye who have sound minds,
> Mark well the doctrine that conceals itself
> Beneath the veil of the mysterious verses!" [3]

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[1] *Essai sur les moeurs.*

[2] Ginguene *Histoire de la litterature italienne*, vol. II.—M. Villemain (vol. I. of his course) was the first to point out the numerous aspects under which the genius of Dante may be contemplated.

[3] Inferno, cant. ix., terz. 21.

Thus, in proposing to set forth in clearer light the PHILOSOPHY OF DANTE, we do not pretend to point out a fact hitherto unperceived, but to insist upon a fact too much neglected. The ambition of discovery is not ours. We have thought we should be doing as much as our powers would permit, and also, something for the advancement of knowledge, if we were to seek out some *datum* furnished by respectable authorities, and follow it through its developments, which may offer more than one species of interest.

And first, of all things in the Middle Ages, the most calumniated, and the last to find rehabilitation, is its philosophy.[1] Ignorance in regard to it aroused contempt, and contempt in turn encouraged ignorance. It has been represented to us as speaking a barbarous language, as pedantic in its form, and monkish in its spirit. Under so unfavorable an exterior, we readily fancied it entirely confined to theological studies, and often given over to profitless speculations or endless controversies. It seemed to us that Leibnitz had treated the School with great indulgence when he assured us that we might find gold amid its refuse. But here (in Dante) is a philosophy expressed in the most melodious language of Europe, in a popular idiom comprehended by women and children. Its lessons are canticles, recited to princes to charm their leisure hours, and repeated by artisans to refresh their souls after labor. We here find it free from the accompaniments of the School and the restrictions of the cloister, blending itself with the sweetest mysteries of the heart, the noisiest contests of the public square: it is familiar, laic, and wholly popular. If we try to follow the course of its explorations, we find it setting out from a profound study of human nature, constantly advancing, extending its guesses over the entire creation, and in the end, but only in the end, losing itself in the contemplation of the Deity. We find it everywhere a foe to dialectic subtleties, using abstractions most soberly and only as necessary formulas to coordinate positive knowledge, little given to dreaming, and less concerned with the reform of opinions than with the reformation of morals. Then, if we inquire into the origin of this philosophy, we learn that it was born in the shadow of the chair of scholastic doctrines, that it gives itself out as their interpreter, that it proves its mission and glories in it. We have here, doubtless, a phenomenon remarkable in itself, but there may be still more behind: the pupil, perchance, may reconcile us with his teachers; we may even seat ourselves at their feet. Accumulated prejudices may be dissipated, and their dispersion will enable us to recognize a vast gap in the history of learning; a gap now well known, and soon to be filled.

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[1] This rehabilitation, commenced by the lessons of M. Cousin (History of Philosophy, Lesson II.), has been greatly forwarded by the recent publication of the works of Abelard, and by the learned researches accompanying them.

There are prejudices of another kind which it is no less important to set aside. There are many now-a-days who deem poetry merely an affair of art, who see in it only a relative beauty resulting from the triple harmony of the thoughts, of the thoughts with the words, and of the words among themselves. These light-minded souls make no account of the logical value of thought, nor of the moral significance of words. Art is to them a mere source of pleasure, without any ulterior aim, for the reason that to them life is a pageant without serious meaning; they are held captive in the visible world within portals closed for them by sensualism and doubt. Their traditions are those of sundry poets of antiquity, and of some of modern times, who sing only of sensations and passions, and whose greatest triumph is to arouse in those who listen to them terror and pity, affections for the most part sterile. Hence the indifference which in our day greets so many poetical efforts; hence the rancor of neglected authors; and hence also, if we may so phrase it, that reciprocal isolation of literature and of society which prevents their uniting for their mutual vivification. Now, here is a poet who appeared in a tumultuous age, who lived as if enveloped in storms. Yet, behind the moving shadows of life, he divined immutable realities. Led by reason and by faith, he outstrips time, penetrates into the invisible world, there takes possession, and establishes himself as if in his native land—he who has no longer a country here below.

From that lofty station, when his eyes fall upon human things, he is able to see at once the beginning and the end; consequently, he measures and judges them. His discourses are instructions which master conviction and influence conscience, while by their rhythm they take firm root in the memory. They are like a preaching addressed to the multitude, an exhorting never silent, taking men captive by seizing upon the strongest of their endowments, intelligence and love. This is then a poetry which, to the three harmonies whence beauty results, joins two others, the harmony of the thought with that which is, that is to say, truth; and the harmony of the word with that which ought to be, namely, morality.

It thus possesses a double value, mental and moral, responding to the dearest needs of the greatest number of men: it wins the comprehension of those whom it has comprehended; it is a working power; it is, as the phrase runs, *social*. Here again is a phenomenon that undeniably merits a place in the history of art. It is indeed more than a phenomenon, it is an example, and an example, when it is excellent, carries with it the refutation of contrary theories.

The union of two things so rare, a poetic and popular philosophy and a philosophic and really *social* poetry, constitutes a memorable event, indicating one of the highest degrees of power to which the human mind has ever attained. If every power, or force, finds its exciting cause in the circumstances environing it, the event just indicated must lead us to appreciate the intellectual culture of the epoch in which it is encountered. As we pause with respect before the dwelling wherein an illustrious man was born, although the walls may be blackened by age and we do not comprehend its interior arrangement, so may we also learn to respect the civilization amid which Dante lived, although it may seem to us blurred in the shadow of a far-away time. To do this, we shall have to modify some of our historical habits: we may even be obliged to throw back by two centuries or more, the generally admitted date of the renaissance, which date calumniously takes for granted the degradation of the ten preceding generations. We shall be forced to confess that men already understood the art of thinking and of speaking, even while they still knew how to believe and to pray. We shall render homage to that heroic age, that beautiful adolescence of Christian humanity, toward which, in these days of stormy virility, we often have need to turn our eyes. Such tardy confessions are not lacking at the present time. Yet, if we may be permitted to attach any especial hope to the result of this our own work, it will be the hope that such avowals may be multiplied. It has been above all a feeling of filial piety which has guided us while collecting the facts and ideas to be set forth in this volume: they are for us a few more flowers to be strewn upon the graves of our fathers who were good and great, a few more grains of incense to be offered at the altar of Him who made them good and great that His designs might be wrought out.

These motives, determining the selection of the philosophic point of view occupied by us, will not make us forget the limits of the horizon which it embraces. We shall not attempt to take in the immense range swept by the vision, nor to follow out all the mysterious labyrinths of the Divine Comedy: we know that the memories of the past and the scenes of the present, political passions and passions of a tenderer kind, national traditions and religious beliefs, heaven and earth, all had their share in this admirable creation:

> "The poem sacred
> To which both heaven and earth have set their hand."[1]

We recognize in it portions that are epic, elegiac, didactic, all gathered together in a harmonious whole. The didactic portion, in its turn, seems to us divisible into two parts: the first, truly theological; the second, truly philosophical. But the Divine Comedy is like one of those vast inheritances fallen into the hands of a weak and impoverished posterity, who must divide, that they may properly till it. We have chosen the portion hitherto the least cultivated, but perhaps one of the richest; we cannot begin to clear up the ground unless we first step outside of its boundaries.

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[1] Paradiso, cant. xxv., terz. 1.

Everything, in fact, ought to be studied in connection with its surroundings (*dans son milieu*). Even when we endeavor to isolate some one subject in order the better to master it, we cannot entirely withdraw it from the influence of things exterior to itself. In every abstraction, there remains some small degree of reality, as in an artificial vacuum there always remains a small quantity of air. A philosophical system is not an isolated fact, it is the product of all the faculties of the soul: these faculties obey a previously-received education, impulsions external to the soul itself. It will then be useful to begin by studying the general aspect of Dante's epoch, the phases of contemporary scholastic teaching, the especial characteristics of the Italian school to which he belonged, the studies and the vicissitudes which filled up his life, and the influence which all these causes combined necessarily exerted upon his doctrines.

It was doubtless in the Divine Comedy that the genius of the author found expression. But genius can never be all contained within the limits of a single form, let that form be as vast as it may; it overflows the boundaries set, and whether by preluding its chosen work, or by occasionally interrupting it, it finds other channels for the exuberance of its inspirations. Thus the hand that traced the Divine Comedy threw off, as if in play, other writings which are a commentary upon it, and its natural complement. From a comparison of these several documents, one with another, but in the main adhering to the conceptions encountered in the poem, we shall endeavor to bring forth a complete analysis of the author's philosophy. After sketching the separate features of this philosophy, we shall try to characterize the whole taken together. We must transport ourselves into the divers orders of ideas, in the centre of which it seems to have its place. We will examine by what points it holds to each one, how it touches upon reminiscences of the Academy or of the Lyceum, on the disputes between the realists and the nominalists, on the recent discussions concerning materialism and spirituality. Then we will rise with it above systems that pass away; we will follow it to the foot of an immutable tribunal, that of Religion. Lending ourselves to old controversies recently renewed, we shall see whether we are to place the Italian poet amid the tumultuous crowd of heterodox minds, or to admit him among the noblest disciples of eternal orthodoxy.

The logical order of these researches presupposes the solution of several historic questions, an exhaustive examination of which would necessitate long digressions; these questions will form the subjects of some supplementary disquisitions; the book will close with a series of extracts from St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas, Albert the Great, and Roger Bacon, which, containing in small compass some principal points of their teaching, may perhaps render clearer the doctrine of Dante by showing that of his masters, and may aid in making known the CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

This goal reached, if we look behind us, we shall not be able to conceal from ourselves the insufficiency of our efforts. The Divine Comedy is in some sense the composite result of all the conceptions of the Middle Ages, each one of which in turn is the resultant of a gradual work carried on through the length and breadth of the schools. Christian, Arabian, Alexandrian, Latin, Greek, and having its beginning far back in the sanctuaries of the East. It would be worth while to follow out this long genealogy. It would be well worth our while to know how many centuries and generations, how many vigils forgotten or unknown, thoughts obtained with difficulty, then abandoned, returned to or transformed, had been required to render such a work possible: what it cost, and consequently, what value is to be placed upon it. But a study of this kind would never come to an end. If Bernadin de Saint-Pierre discovered a world of insects on a strawberry vine, and, after twenty days of observation, withdrew confounded before the wonders of one humble plant, is it astonishing that one great man, one single book of that great man, a single aspect of that book should suffice for the labor of many years? But will the years consumed in such a way leave no regret behind them?. . . . Like to our poet, a pilgrim through the limitless regions of history, surrounded by all the figures of the past, we are allowed only a short converse with each one of them, under penalty of not being able to accost the rest. To us, as to him, it seems that a voice cries out:

> "Already is the moon beneath our feet:
> The time permitted now is short; and things
> By thee undreamed of still remain to see."[1]

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[1] Inferno, xxix., 4.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL SITUATION OF CHRISTENDOM FROM THE THIRTEENTH TO THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY; CAUSES FAVORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY.

DIVINE Providence and human liberty, the two great powers whose combined operation explains history, sometimes act in unison that the work of the ages may be prosecuted with increased vigor, and the face of all things be renewed. At such times, certain unanimous instincts, dwelling in the multitude as if manifestations of the will of God (*vox Dei*), change their direction. Political institutions, which result from a certain development of the faculties of man, give way under the influence of an ulterior movement. Such epochs are known as epochs of transition. One of these is met with in the Middle Ages, extending from the middle of the thirteenth to somewhat beyond the first years of the fourteenth century.

I. At that period, the Church itself, unchangeable in the accomplishment of its eternal destinies, admitted a certain change in its action upon the temporal affairs of Christendom. If it again, upon two occasions, descended into the arena, if it withstood Frederic II., and Philip the Fair in defence of the liberties of all, on an other occasion, in presence of the misfortunes of its head, Boniface VIII., it judged that other days had set in. It then began to lay aside the political guardianship it had exercised over nations still in their infancy, but now become strong enough to take upon themselves the defence of their own causes. It slowly retreated within the limits of the spiritual domain. Four œcumenical councils, one at the Lateran, two at Lyons, and one at Vienne, called together in less that one hundred years, had already extended the comprehension of dogmas, had tightened the bonds of discipline, and had provided for the reform of morals. Four religious orders newly instituted, the Order of St. Dominic and that of St. Francis, the Augustinians, and the Fathers of Mercy, multiplied, wherever they went, the light of instruction and the works of love. The thought of religion hovered less frequently over battlefields, and entered less into the councils of princes, but it had succeeded in taking a more assured place at family firesides, it penetrated more deeply into the solitude of individual consciences; it there formed virtues crowned by the aureola of the saints. There are few periods which have so abundantly peopled our altars.

On the other hand, the shores of Africa had witnessed the failure of two crusades, the last heroic efforts of Christendom to pass beyond its European boundaries. The Christian world had been forced to defend its northern frontiers against hordes of Mongolians, and to win its southern bounds back from the Moors. Satisfied with preserving its independence from the powers without, it thenceforth employed its energies within its own borders. To the glorious era of conquest, succeeded the laborious era of political organization. The Holy Roman Empire, dishonored by the crimes of the Hohenstaufen, lost the homage of its most illustrious feudatories and its old title to universal supremacy. Escaped from the centralization which menaced them, the new nationalities were in progress of establishment; they were separating one from another, arranging their boundaries, and this not without frequent wars, frequent diplomatic experiments, the first rudiments of international law. The feudal aristocracy ceased to be that exclusive power before which many generations had silently bowed. It was forced to enter into a struggle, or into a series of negotiations with royalty, which was breaking away from it, and with the clergy and the people, who both energetically laid claim to their respective franchises. Under the names of Estates, of Parliaments, of Diets, or of Cortes, representative assemblies existed, where the three orders appeared as the moral, military, and financial guardians of the nations. But above all did the Third Estate, the fruit of the emancipation of the towns, increased by the enfranchisement of large numbers of serfs, ingenious in maintaining in its ranks that union which is the source of strength, and skilful in forming alliances with the older powers, gradually enlarge the part allotted to it in public affairs. Local and arbitrary customs yielded to the general authority of the ordinances of the princes, to the learned authority of Roman jurisprudence. The newly codified laws were executed through the ministry of a settled magistracy which admitted plebeians to sit in its courts. From that juncture must date the renaissance of the civil law.

Peaceful revolutions were also in progress within the realm of thought. Theology still led the sciences, but, without jealousy she beheld them grow up around her. The travels of Marco Polo, the missionary efforts of a few poor friars who crossed the deserts of northern Asia, Genoese vessels borne by the winds to the Canary Islands, had enlarged the limits of the known world. The discovery or invention of the compass, of spectacles and of gunpowder, led men to divine forces in nature till then unperceived. On every hand were opened schools of various sorts, often special in their purpose, as those of Salerno and Montpellier for medicine, and that of Pisa for jurisprudence. In the principal divisions of the Christian world arose universities, really worthy of the name from the encyclopedic character of their teaching and the multitude of students they attracted from the most distant lands. Paris set the first example; Oxford, Bologna, Padua, Salamanca, Naples, Upsal, Lisbon, and Rome followed it before the lapse of a hundred years. The progress of the arts had been still more rapid. The day of great inspirations was already past: that of analytical labor had begun. To the epics of chivalry and the lyrics which had been sung, succeeded a poetry friendly to allegory and to satire, didactic, often pedantic, which, abandoned by music, preserved only rhythm. Prose, in its turn, withdrew the written word from the laws of rhythm to subject it solely to the laws of a grammar not yet settled. It made its first timid attempts in collections of laws and in chronicles, meanwhile fixing the character of modern languages. The arts of design followed a similar course. Architecture, after reaching the highest perfection possible to the Gothic style, strove to gain in elaborateness what it perhaps lost in purity. Painting and sculpture, sheltered beneath its shadow, subjected to its dispositions, and treated until then as simple subordinates, no longer contented themselves with giving life to stained windows and peopling the niches of basilicas; they ventured upon independent compositions in the frescos which began to cover the walls, and in the decorations of tombs. Finally, commerce, which, under favor of the crusades, had extended the circle of its maritime enterprises, was now busied in exploring overland routes and in multiplying centres of trade. Manufacturing industries prospered in the cities, protected by municipal liberties. The transformation of serfdom into vassalage encouraged agriculture, as previously the change of slavery into serfdom had regenerated it.[1]

Amid these varying forms of human activity, Philosophy could not remain stationary. The noise of the exterior world penetrated even into the deepest solitudes, and there deflected the course and prolonged the duration of the most serious meditations. Generous souls are unwilling to remain on a level lower than that of the facts which they witness, and great events call forth great ideas. But the movement that was taking place was a movement of withdrawal and of interior organization, when elements, foreign to one another but until then confounded, separated, or attracted to themselves homogeneous elements until then divided. This movement reproducing itself in philosophy, was converted into reflection, abstraction, recomposition, that is to say, into the very acts which constitute the science of philosophy. In this way did the forces, developed by the age, bear upon that science and determine the exercise of its powers.

II. The men of the day co-operated with the force of circumstances. First in order came the sovereign pontiffs: Innocent IV., whose inflexible courage swayed the thirteenth century, sought to reign also through the cultivation of intelligence. Forced to fly from city to city, and to find shelter beneath foreign roofs, he gathered around him, as the sole ornament of his exile, a group of learned men who formed in themselves an entire university. Later. extending his solicitude to all the schools of Christendom, he was filled with apprehension at seeing students crowd around the chairs of jurisprudence and desert those of philosophy. He endeavored to re-direct attention to the last named study; he even attached to it temporal interest by deciding it to be an indispensable preliminary to the attainment of ecclesiastical honors and benefices.[1] Urban IV. commanded that at Rome, and under his own eye, physics and ethics should be taught by St. Thomas Aquinas. Every day, after dinner, he encouraged among his cardinals philosophical discussions, in which he himself took part. This honorable familiarity consoled science, and made it forget the haughty contempt bestowed upon it by gilded puppets and ignorant, mail-clad men.[2] On the papal throne and in the person of Clement IV., Roger Bacon found the sole protector of his much calumniated labors. Other popes were the possessors, not only of friendly dispositions, but of personal learning and a justly acquired renown: such were Peter of Tarentasia, orator, canonist, and metaphysician, who took the name of Innocent V.; and John XXI., better known as Peter the Spaniard, who was the author of a logic received with unanimous approbation and long regarded as a classic work.[1]

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[1] We here speak of the vicissitudes of the arts in the northern countries of Europe only. In Italy, other causes had prepared for them an earlier and more continuous prosperity. The facts we have just called to mind are reflected by many allusions in Dante's poem, while their consequences are evident in his doctrines.

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[1] Tiraboschi, t. IV., lib. I., cap. II. Duboulay, *Histoire de l'Université*, ann. 1254.

[2] Tiraboschi, t. IV., lib. II., cap. II. Letter from Campano de Novara to Pope Urban IV.

Among secular princes, several followed these examples. First in rank came Frederic II., emperor of Germany, the wearer of four crowns, whose reign was a long forty years' war, and who appeared by turns as legislator and as tyrant—a conquering barbarian under his tents in Lombardy, a voluptuous sultan in his seraglios of Apulia and Sicily, a troubadour by inclination, and a philosopher, perhaps, through ostentation. During the hours of leisure passed in his well filled library, Greek or Arabic manuscripts were often unrolled by him; he wished to make them known in Europe, and, in a manifesto drawn up by his chancellor. Pietro delle Vigne, he announced the translation of a number of works, including probably some of the writings of Aristotle.[2] Learning met with no less favor under King Robert of Naples.

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[1] Brucker, *Hist. critic. philos.*, Vol. III., period II., part II., bk. II., chap. iii., sect. 2.—Dante, Paradiso, cant. xii., terz. 44.

[2] Brucker, *Hist. critic. philos.*, chap. iii., sect. 1.—Jourdain, *Recherches sur les traductions d'Aristote*, 2d edition.

lauded after his death as a consummate sage[1]; under Alphonso of Castile, who merited the title of the Wise, and even at the English court, where an adulatory crowd gathered to listen to the lessons of Duns Scotus.[2] But in no country better than in France did royalty know how to reflect honor upon itself by the influence which it exerted on the cultivation of the human understanding. The tale would be a long one to tell:—St. Thomas Aquinas invited to the table of St. Louis, and the king making his secretaries write down the sudden inspirations of the Angelic Doctor; Vincent of Beauvais admitted, in virtue of his position as reader, to the intimacy of the same prince; the Sorbonne founded; Philip the Bold naming as instructor to his son the famous Egidius Colonna.[3] It suffices to call to mind that the benefactions of the French kings made the prosperity of the University of Paris. They gave to it that prestige which attracted to its benches forty thousand students of every nationality, called to its chairs the most illustrious foreigners, and rendered it worthy of being saluted by the popes as the fountain of truth, the centre of illumination.[4] So that, placing ourselves in the thirteenth century on the modest hill of St. Genevieve, we may see gathering as tributaries at its foot, all the intellectual glories of the Catholic world; we may hear discussed the innumerable questions raised in controversy; we may descry from afar the evolutions of struggling minds: in short, from that view-point we may overlook the entire course of contemporary philosophy.

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[1] Tiraboschi, t. V., lib. I., cap. II. He quotes Petrarch and Boccaccio.

[2] Brucker, *Hist. critic. philos.*, chap. iii., sect. 2.

[3] Brucker, *loc. cit.*, Michelet, *Histoire de France*, Vols. II. and III.

[4] Bull of Alexander IV., cited by Raynaldus.

The spiritual power and the temporal, so often armed one against the other, were then in agreement regarding their action upon the labors of thought. Both assured to conscientious study security, liberty, and leisure. Both, above all, by conferring upon instruction public consecration, imposed on it the abnegation of all personal rivalries, and formed it to grave and conciliatory habits.

III. One of the most prominent consequences of the protection of learning by the great, was the rapid multiplication of books and translations, and hence the daily increasing accessibility of the learning of antiquity and the doctrines of the East. The latest writers escaping the ruin of Rome, together with the *Organum* of Aristotle and the treatises of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, were the introductory teachers of the first scholastics.[1] Later, the crusades had familiarized the Latins with the languages of Greece and of the Orient. The works of St. John Damascen were translated, and William, abbot of St. Denis, brought back with him from Constantinople sundry manuscripts, among which might have been found the Physics, Metaphysics, and Ethics of Aristotle.[1] Already had daring pilgrims gone to the schools of Toledo and Cordova in search of Mussulman learning. But it was especially toward the period now occupying us that Hellenism and Orientalism intervened, with an unexpected display of strength, in the philosophical destinies of the West. The diversity of idioms was no longer an obstacle for an age which had witnessed the conquest of the Byzantine empire and the invasion of Egypt by the armies of France: the works of Avicenna and of Averroes appeared in the Latin tongue; Moses Maimonides made known the works of Mussulman doctors as well as the reveries of the Jewish Kabbala; at the same time, Ptolemy's Almagesta, Plato's Timaeus, the books of Proclus, and others less renowned, found interpreters. But great above all was the good fortune of Aristotle; his works. already translated from Arabic versions, were retranslated from the original text. Some treatises passed even into the popular idioms. The opposition, at first so threatening, of the University of Paris, which had obtained in a provincial council the condemnation of the peripatetic doctrines, had been moderated by the wisdom of Pope Gregory IX.; this opposition soon began to admit exceptions; it then inclined toward a general toleration, and ended by dying out under the influence of the most venerated doctors, who, covering the Stagyrite with their mantle, conducted him, not merely to the threshold, but even to the very centre of the School.[1] At the beginning of the fourteenth century, classic Antiquity and the East received a sort of solemn welcome into the Christian Republic, when, at the council of Vienne, it was ordained to establish in the four principal universities and in the place where the Roman court should have its residence, chairs of Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and Greek.[2] This authority conceded to the Ancients and the Arabs, was not arbitrary in its principle: it was due to a long series of hard working men, not without an occasional sublime inspiration, who represented the learned tradition of the human race. If this tradition cannot be accepted without examination, neither can it be neglected without imprudence. The secret of all really scientific progress lies in an economy wisely careful of the experience of the past as applicable to the needs of the future. Woe indeed to isolated generations, which, not having received the heritage of instruction or having repudiated it, are obliged to begin afresh, frail and mortal as they are, the work of the ages!

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[1] On the history of the *Organum* in the Middle Ages, see the *Memoire* de M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, Vol. II. See also Brucker, *loc. cit.* lib. II., cap. II.

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[1] The marriage of Otho II. to Theophania must have conduced to the reestablishment of intercourse between the West and Greece. M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire has proved the continuity of Greek studies through the Middle Ages. Jourdain, *Recherches sur les traductions d'Aristote*, 2d edition.

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[1] Lannoi, *de Variâ Aristotelis fortunâ*. Jourdain, *Recherches*, ch. V.

[2] Tiraboschi, t. V. lib. III., cap. IV.—John of Salisbury, Robert Grosse-Tête, Roger Bacon, Albert the Great, and even Héloise, appear to have known Greek and Hebrew. See Brucker, *loc. cit.*

Thus, while contemporary events communicated to philosophy an enduring movement, and the good will of men in power gave it a direction, the appearance of antique and foreign doctrines marked for it its point of departure.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

When the barbarian invaded Europe, trampling under foot the long cultured furrows of Latin civilization, the small amount of learning scattered here and there that still remained after the great catastrophe, was gathered together by pious hands, closely grasped that the loss might not be total, and enclosed within a narrow circle, a meagre encyclopædia, which reduced the liberal arts to the number of seven, divided into *trivium* and *quadrivium*.[1] Philosophy was included in this cycle only by the least of its parts, dialectics; theology found in it no place; the science of divine things remained secluded in the depths of the sanctuary, apparently inactive in certain directions.

But brighter days were at hand. Within the depths of the sanctuary, amid the inspiring ceremonial of divine worship and the reverberation of the preacher's voice, Theology had roused herself; she sought to form a conception of the invisible things which she proposed for belief; this was the beginning of the metaphysical studies of the period. Thenceforth, dialectics could no longer be confined within the limits of the *trivium*. Weary of combining words, it attempted to bind together the conceptions which had been elicited, and thus rose to the function of logic. Metaphysics and logic found themselves face to face, and a dogmatic philosophy resulted from their union. The conditions of this union depended upon a primary problem, namely, whether there is a correspondence between the invisible existences postulated by metaphysics and the notions deduced by logic—between realities and ideas. This was the famous problem of *universals*, bequeathed by antiquity (in a phrase contained in the writings of the Alexandrian, Porphyry) to the Middle Ages, which accepted the inheritance. St. Anselm resolved it by concluding the existence of God from the notion of God, by establishing the necessary reality of the idea of perfection, by realizing all general ideas, thus making himself the head of the *Realists*.

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[1] This division of the branches of learning, probably derived from a Pythagorean source, is found in Philo, *de Congressu*, in Tzetzès Chil., IX, 377. It was introduced into the West by the writings of Cassiodorus and Martianus Capella.

Others, on the contrary with Roscelin, refused all objective value to general ideas, and recognized in genus and species merely arbitrary creations of language: these were the *Nominalists*. The two rival schools renewed the interminable struggle between idealism and sensism. They had illustrious champions, as William of Champeaux and Abelard, who filled Christendom with the din of their mutual onslaughts. The discussion multiplied the divisions:

there were four sects of Realists, and the Nominalists numbered three.[1]

These contradictory conclusions of human reason seemed to declare its inefficiency. Some rejected the uncertain aid of logic and thought to rise to knowledge by intuition, to intuition by means of asceticism. There was then a mystic philosophy, whose principles were formulated by the writings of Godfrey, Hugh, and Richard, all monks of the abbey of St. Victor.[2] Theology, when awaking rational studies from slumber, called them out upon the border lines between orthodoxy and human opinion. These boundaries, often difficult to determine, were frequently not properly recognized. Certain doctrines aroused suspicion; others, as those of Amaury of Chartres and David of Dinant, called forth solemn anathemas. From the violent collision between scientific liberty and religious authority, arose doubt. Confused memories of pagan literature, and the first influence of Saracen doctors, encouraged scepticism.[1] Thus, from the beginning of the thirteenth century, all the tendencies of the human mind had shown themselves, and their very divergence testified to their energy.

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[1] The dispute between the Realists and the Nominalists, previously set forth by Brucker, Chap. III, Sect. 3; by Degerando, Vol. IV; Bühle, and Thenemann; has been ably analyzed in the preface to the edition of the works of Abelard, issued by M. Cousin. John of Salisbury, in his *Metalogicus* cited by Brucker, *ibid.* enumerates six different opinions as dividing Realism.

[2] Cousin, Course of History of Philosophy, Vol. I.

II. This century, already glorious under so many titles, was also that in which scholastic philosophy reached its apogee. The abdication of power which the Church was about to make in the political order, had already been preluded by Theology in the intellectual order. Theology emancipated philosophy, which, under her tuition, had acquired strength enough to stand alone. She retained only her maternal superiority and the relations of reciprocal assistance: there was a certain separation, but neither in all things nor for ever; emancipation, but no mutual disavowal. "The science of Faith," said the doctors, "considers created things only in as much as they reflect an imperfect image of the Divinity: human philosophy considers them in the modes of being which are proper to themselves. The philosopher proposes to himself the investigation of secondary and special causes; the believer meditates on the First Cause. In philosophical teaching, we start from the knowledge of creatures to reach the idea of God, who is the end; in the teaching of Faith, we begin by the idea of God, and, discovering in Him the universal order, of which He is the centre, we come to the knowledge of creatures. This second method is the more perfect, since it assimilates human intelligence to the Divine Intelligence, which, in contemplating Itself, contemplates all things in Itself. And yet the science of theologians may borrow somewhat from the labor of philosophers, not that such labor is necessary to it, but to lend more clearness to the dogmas which it presents to our belief."[1]

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[1] Cousin, *loc. cit.* Brucker, Chap. III. Sect. 1. *Précis de l'hist. de la philosophie*, issued by the directors of the *Collége de Juilly*, p. 275.

Thenceforth assured of a distinct existence, and one certainly not without honor, philosophy developed freely, and we may see the wide limits she assigned to herself when defining her own position: "Philosophy is the study of intelligible truths; and, as these truths relate to words, to things, or to morals, it is rational, natural, or moral. Rational, it embraces grammar, which has for its object the expression of ideas; logic, which is concerned in their transmission; and rhetoric, which aims at producing emotions. Natural, it comprises physics, which treats of the generation and corruption of things; mathematics, by which we consider abstract forms and general laws; metaphysics, by which we lead things back to their cause, their type, their end. Moral, it bears the divers names of monastics, economics, or politics, according as it aims at procuring the good of the individual, of the family, or of the state."[2]

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[1] St. Thomas, *Summa contra gentes*, lib. II, cap. IV. *Summa Theologiae*, p. 1, q. I, art. IV.

[2] St. Bonaventura, *de Reductione artium ad Theologiam*. Idem, *Breviloquium*: "Philosophia est medium per quod theologus fabricat sibi speculum ex creaturis ex quibus tanquam per scalam erigitur in cœlum."

This enumeration gave to philosophy the position of a universal science, such as the ancients conceived it when they embraced within its limits eloquence and poetry, geometry and legislation, and when they named it, the knowledge of things human and divine.[1] If, besides, we eliminate grammar, rhetoric, and mathematics, which, already contained in the seven arts, had their own special teaching, there remained logic, physics, metaphysics, and morals, which, all taken together, constituted the course of philosophy of the School, embracing a comprehensive system of doctrines, questions asked and answers given in regard to God, nature, and humanity, thus forming the necessary completion of the previous studies. But, since in this course, logic occupied the first place, and a close examination of intellectual phenomena was made before permission was given to devote oneself to the exploration of the outer world, it was first in ideas that one studied things, truths of all kinds appeared primarily in the light of consciousness; from that time, although as yet without receiving any name, existed psychology, on which branch were to be concentrated the philosophical researches of the moderns. So that all the definitions which have been given of philosophy at every period of its existence, the broadest as well as the deepest, are applicable to the scholastic philosophy.

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[1] Cicero, *Tuscul.*, lib. v. *de Officiis*, II.

To act in the new sphere opened to it, philosophy required a union of all its powers. It needed an organization capable of directing the widely scattered efforts of thought to an efficient co-operation. We have already mentioned the political causes favoring the convergence of the existing variety of systems. Among the numerous shades of realism and nominalism, there were some which nearly approached one another. Thus, the opinion of Gilbert de la Porée, who admitted generality only in the laws of nature, seemed readily to blend with that of John of Salisbury, who allowed the legitimacy of general ideas formed by the abstraction of the qualities common to many individuals.[1]

This fusion was actually effected. And while, dating from about the year 1200, all Christian thinkers took with pride the name of realists, conceptualism, an outcome of nominalism, had penetrated to the depths of their teaching. Thus were reconciled the two schools which had divided the area of dogmatism by adhering without reserve either to the experience of the senses or to the infallibility of reason. They also learned to appreciate the importance of mysticism, and borrowed from it those intuitive perceptions of which it alone possesses the secret. At the same time, the temptations to scepticism called into being by an imperfect and consequently dangerous knowledge of pagan and mussulman doctrines, disappeared before a complete erudition, which filled the part of a wise and cautious moderator. The final result was a veritable eclecticism, whereby an alliance was concluded embracing reason, the senses, intuition, the tradition of the past, each and all of the great powers of the understanding. In lieu of the exclusive sects of the preceding period, arose illustrious doctors, each one representing more especially one or another of the said powers, but not thence failing to recognize the others.

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[1] Brucker, Chap. III., Sect. 3.

III. Alain de Lille, Alexander Hales, Vincent of Beauvais, and William of Auvergne, were merely precursors.

Finally appeared Albert the Great (1195–1280), an Atlas who bore on his head the entire round of the learning of his day, and who no whit bent beneath its weight: familiar with the languages of antiquity and of the East, he drew from those two sources of tradition powers really gigantic. From the benches of the University of Paris, where he had sat as a simple learner, he passed to Cologne, where, establishing his chair, he appeared as the initiating hierophant of Germany. His chief merit lies in the extent and the profusion of his erudition. However, he did not neglect pyschological questions, which can be solved only by the personal exercise of reason: he pronounced upon the origin and the value of ideas, and on the division of the faculties of the soul. He did not disdain to interrogate nature, and to seek in persevering observation, in furnaces and crucibles, unknown powers, such as the transmutation of metals. He went still farther, in regions inaccessible to human vision, impenetrable to induction, he thought to discover supernatural agents capable of modifying the regular order of phenomena: it is said that he himself believed in the title of magician conferred on him by his disciples. He continued popular in the memory of posterity, as a being almost mythological and more than human.[1]

In another quarter, in a cell of an obscure English convent, the inspiration which gives rise to great discoveries descended on a poor friar, Roger Bacon (1214–1294). He had studied at Oxford and at Paris, but the imperfections in the studies of his time had struck him at an early period: he sought out the causes, demonstrated the need of reform, proposed its conditions, and himself set the example. He held especially to the value of *experience*, an enlightened, thoughtful experience, which, not content with merely investigating phenomena, calls them forth, and reproduces them by way of experiment. Amid the sombre shadows of his laboratory, this unknown man had a vision of the future. He says: "One may cause to burst forth from bronze thunderbolts more formidable than those produced by nature: a small quantity of prepared matter occasions a terrible explosion accompanied by a brilliant light. One may multiply this phenomenon so far as to destroy a city or an army. Art can construct instruments of navigation such that the largest vessels, governed by a single man, will traverse rivers and seas more rapidly than if they were filled with oarsmen. One may also make carriages, which, without the aid of any animal, will run with immeasurable swiftness."[1]

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[1] Cousin, Course of History of Philosophy, vol. I.—Albert, *Summa de Creaturis, de Anima*, lib. 1. tract. 2. *Libellus de Alchimia.*—Dante, Paradiso, x., 34.

Roger Bacon, however, could tear himself away from such attractive investigations and visit other portions of the domain of philosophy. He solved in an eclectic sense the question of *universals.* In addition to external experience and the conceptions of reason, he admitted an interior experience which is acquired in the communion of the soul with God. He also accepted the authority of the wisdom of the antique world, but not until it had been tested by severe criticism: philology was to him the object of many and prolonged meditations. Providence conferred upon him length of days, and science awaited from him a whole century of progress; but the wonder of his contemporaries, who named him the Admirable (*Doctor mirabilis*), was changed to odious suspicion. His old age was passed in a prison, and light was lacking to his latest labors. In after years, at the era of the "Reformation," his manuscripts were destroyed in the burning of a convent by men who professed to be relighting the torch of reason extinguished by the monks of the Middle Ages.[1]

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[1] Roger Bacon, *de Secretis Artis et Naturæ.* Gunpowder appears to have been employed a hundred years before his time by the Moors in Spain. But Bacon was doubtless one of the earliest among the learned men of Europe to make known its wonderful effects. Neither can we with perfect certainty credit him with the invention of the telescope.

About the same period, under a less severe sky, at the foot of the hills of Tuscany and Calabria (whose slopes have given birth to so many great men), two brother geniuses were born: nearly of the same age, the same day found them brought together in Paris to receive academic honors; a mutual friendship united them during their lives, the same year saw them descend into the tomb, and a like veneration placed them both upon our altars. In history, we cannot disjoin St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas Aquinas.

St. Bonaventure (1221–1274), endowed with an intelligence perhaps less laborious and more loving than that of his illustrious contemporary, inclined to the doctrines of the contemplatives, and strove to harmonize with them the legitimate exercise of all the faculties of man. "From God," according to him, "all light descends; but this light is multiform in its mode of communication. The exterior light, or tradition, illumines the mechanical arts; the inferior light, which is that of the senses, gives rise in us to experimental ideas; the interior light, which we call reason, makes us know intelligible truths; the superior light comes from Grace and from the Holy Scriptures, and it reveals to us the truths which sanctify. These divers orders of knowledge are co-ordinated among themselves, and form an ascending progression. The soul, after having descended to the study of external objects, ought to retire within itself, where it will discover the reflex of the eternal realities; then it must rise into the region of eternal realities that it may contemplate the first principle, God. From this first principle it will see emanating influences which are felt through all the degrees of creation; redescending, as it had ascended, it will recognize traces of the Divine operation in everything that is conceived, felt, and taught. Thus all the sciences are interpenetrated with mysteries, and it is only by grasping the clue to the mystery that we can reach to the profoundest depth of the science." Unfortunately for his disciples, the Seraphic Doctor (*Doctor Seraphicus*) ascended too speedily, and by too short a way, to the mystic heights which he had pointed out from below: he died during the sitting of the second council of Lyons. The assembled delegates of the universal Church honored his obsequies. And if to his memory was still due another kind of homage, less imposing and much later in time, it was found in the fact that a hundred and fifty years after his death his writings consoled the pious Gerson in the solitude to which he had retired, wearied with the sight of a corrupt society and the disputes of a degenerate school.[1]

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[1] *Précis de l'histoire de la philosophie.* p. 293.

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[1] *Précis de l'hist. de la philos.* St. Bonav., *de Reductione artium ad Theologiam.*—Gerson, *apud* Brucker, *loc. cit.*—Dante, Paradiso, xii.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274) had heard his master, Albert, define the human mind as a "potential all." We may say that he himself was this *all* realized. Never were more excellent qualities more happily combined, while the whole was governed by a lofty, serious, meditative reason. Hence. when his companions in study called him the great Sicilian Ox, his teachers accepted the augury for him. The ordinary abode of his thoughts was to be the most rational of all sciences, that consequently which rules and co-ordinates all the others, namely: metaphysics.[1] There, at the end of every speculation, the inevitable problem of *universals* presented itself; it became necessary to pronounce on the objective reality of rational conceptions, to establish the equation between ideas and things St. Thomas admits in God the existence of ideas archetypes of creation; but man has no direct vision of these archetypes. His knowledge is formed of the images received by the senses, and the abstract perceptions which arise from them when viewed in the light of reason.[2] This conciliatory logic, which conceded a proper place to the intervention of the senses, was to lead St. Thomas in his physical researches. He refuted the opinion which excluded bodies from the primitive plan of creation; he gave them a place in the hierarchy of beings, and discovered in them a concurrence in the universal order, a ceaseless tendency to perfection, a foot-print of the Divinity. However, his speculative investigations brought him back to practical matters: he established the existence of a series of laws binding together in the net-work of their precepts, man, the family, and society; he also recognized the excellence of contemplation; he knew the paths by which transcendent virtue may lead to the immediate vision of eternal truth.[1]

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[1] St. Thomas, *Prolog. ad Metaphysic.*

[2] *Summa Theologiæ*, p. i., q. xv. art., 13.—*Opuscul. de Sensu respectu particularium et Intellectu respectu universalium.*

But it was not enough for him to have proved his ability in so many different departments; he applied himself to the examination of the teaching of his predecessors: various writings of Aristotle, the Timaeus of Plato, the Master of the Sentences, were all in turn objects of his conscientious commentaries. Finally, St. Thomas conceived a work worthy of him, a vast encyclopædia of the moral sciences, in which should be set down all that we can know of God, of man, and of their mutual relations, a philosophy truly Catholic, *Summa totius theologiæ.* That monument, so harmonious in spite of the apparent asperity of its form, colossal in its dimensions, magnificent in its plan, remained indeed unfinished, similar in this respect to so many of the great political, literary, and architectural creations of the Middle Ages, things which destiny has merely shown to us and has not permitted to reach their full accomplishment...

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[1] Cousin, Course of History of Philosophy, vol. I.—Erasmus, Leibnitz, Fontenelle, minds so different, and so little capable of being compared together, all agree in lauding St. Thomas.—Dante, Paradiso, x.-xiii.

> ...Ostendent Fata, nec ultrà
> Esse sinent ...

A prolonged cry of admiration followed the Angel of the school (*Doctor Angelicus*), recalled to heaven.

Albert the Great, Roger Bacon. St. Bonaventure, and St. Thomas Aquinas, form among themselves, so to speak, a complete representation of all the intellectual powers: they are the four doctors who uphold the chair of philosophy in the temple of the Middle Ages. Their mission was truly the re-establishment of the sciences, but not their final consummation. They were not exempt from the ignorances and erroneous opinions of their day. for Providence permits the errors of genius, lest men should believe that nothing further remains for them to do. Often, the majesty, I may even say the grace of their conceptions. disappears under the veil of the expressions in which they are clothed; but these imperfections are amply atoned for by superabundant merits. Those Christian philosophers did not admit within themselves the divorce, since their day become so frequent, between the intellect and the will; their lives were uniformly a laborious application of their doctrines. They realized in its plenitude the practical wisdom so often dreamed of by the ancients—the abstinence of the disciples of Pythagoras. the constancy of the stoics.

together with humility and charity, virtues unknown to the antique world. Albert the Great and St. Thomas left the castles of their noble ancestors to seek obscurity in the cloisters of St. Dominic: the former abdicated, and the latter declined, the honors of the Church. It was with the cord of St. Francis that Roger Bacon and St. Bonaventura girded their loins; when the last named was sought that the Roman purple might be placed upon his shoulders, he begged the envoys to wait, and he finished washing the dishes of the convent. Thus they did not withdraw themselves within the exclusive mysteries of an esoteric teaching; they opened the doors of their schools to the sons of shepherds and artisans, and, like their Master, Christ, they said: "Come all!" After having broken the bread of the word, they were seen distributing the bread of alms The poor knew them and blessed their names. Even yet, after the lapse of six hundred years, the dwellers in Paris kneel round the altar of the Angel of the School, and the workmen of Lyons deem it an honor once a year to bear upon their brawny shoulders the triumphant remains of the Seraphic Doctor.

IV. Scholasticism, however, had not continued without reproach. In those belligerent days, many, whose profession forbade them to break lances and cross swords, carried the ardor of battle into the tourneys of speech. Controversy became the passion of their lives: they might be seen, shrivelled old men, still standing in the highways, discussing each syllable, each letter, of a discourse or an essay.[1] They spread out arguments like nets, they set syllogisms as ambushes, they multiplied combinations of words as nature multiplies combinations of things, and, thanks to innumerable distinctions, they proved and disproved in turn the truth, the falsity, and the uncertainty, of one and the same proposition.[2] But as the insurgent crowd described by the poet, when it beheld a person illustrious through his services and his virtues, calmed down and listened to the words of peace addressed to it, so did this disputatious throng of scholars, young and old, seem suddenly to forget its eagerness and its animosities when the great masters of thought appeared in its midst: wonder imposed silence. But the disorder began again when they had passed away. Another generation arose, and, to men of genius, succeeded men of talent.

Raymond Lully (1244–1315), Duns Scotus (1275–1308), and Ockham (died in 1345), opened the era of decadence. On one hand, Raymond flattered the dangerous tendencies of the dialecticians of his day by offering to them in his combinatory art a mechanical game, whereby could be deduced, without effort and without delay, all the consequences of a given principle. On the other hand, this doctor, born under the sky of Majorca and in the neighborhood of the Mussulman domination, had made extended journeys along the coasts of Africa and to the Levant, and had been inflamed by the full glow of Arabian and Alexandrian mysticism: he emitted the perilous rays amid the eager crowd which his adventurous life gathered about him. The Celt, Duns Scotus, calmer perhaps, but not less desirous of throwing back into a problematic condition, the doctrines of his predecessors, denied the possibility of obtaining certitude in knowledge acquired through the senses. Genus and species appeared to him to be primordial realities: he peopled science with creatures of reason arbitrarily conceived, and, renewing the opinions of the ancient realists, he promulgated the most audacious idealism. Ockham, who passed his days in a series of disputes, religious, political, and literary, at Oxford in his youth, at Paris under Philip the Fair, in Germany with Louis of Bavaria, the veritable knight-errant of controversy, took up the glove in the name of the nominalists. From the axiom that beings ought not to be multiplied without necessity, he was led not only to reject as phantoms the creatures of reason, but to fail to recognize the objective value of the idea of substance, to hesitate before the distinction between spirit and matter, that is, to the extreme limits of sensism. These very hesitations indicate the approach of scepticism, which was about to re-appear, and which nothing so favors as the boldness of dogmatic systems that one can neither believe in nor reply to.

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[1] Salisbury, *Metalogicus*, lib. I., cap. VII.

[2] Walter of St. Victor, *apud* Brucker. Hugh of St. Victor, *Eruditiones didascalicæ*, lib. III., XIX. Richard of St. Victor, *de Gratia contemplationis*, lib. II., II.

Thus did the exclusive schools re-issue from their own ruins. They filled the fourteenth century with their rivalries. Logic, that system of learned gymnastics in the practice of which the European mind had acquired its vigorous temper, degenerated into a skirmish of sophisms, a puerile and dangerous game: questions infinitesimally divided rose like dust under the feet of the combatants.[1] Metaphysics lost itself in an unfruitful ontology, where the *Formalities*, the *Haecceities*, and other capricious creations of the human mind occupied the place properly belonging to the living creations of God.[2] Experience was no longer interrogated; her replies were too slowly obtained and too little pliant to the will of the belligerents; oracles more easily corrupted were looked for in the teachings of antiquity, which were pronounced infallible. Then, amid the almost unanimous concert of Christian teachers, was celebrated the apotheosis of Aristotle. The pagan divinity was not always satisfied with incense; it required sacrifices, the immolation of every independent doctrine.[3] Scholasticism ended amid these orgies, like to the king of Israel, whose youthful wisdom had astonished the world, and who profaned his later days in the temples of foreign idols.

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[1] Bacon, *De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum.*

[2] L. Vives, *apud* Brucker.

[3] Petrarch, quoted by Tiraboschi, vol. v.

V. It was about the middle of the period just described, near to the year 1300, between the apogee and the beginning of the decadence, during one of those solemn moments when even prosperity has something melancholy about it, because it feels its end approaching;—it was at that hour of the swan-song that the philosophy of the Middle Ages was to have its poet. For, while prose, especially the prose of a dead language, as was that of the School, when put to the proof of years, speedily corrupts, and no longer allows the idea enclosed in it to appear free from disfigurement, poetry is like a glorified body, within which the thought may remain incorrupt and recognizable. It is also a subtile form which penetrates everywhere, and can render itself present in the same moment at the most distant points. Immortality and popularity are the two divine gifts of which poets have been made the dispensers. The Greek philosophy had its Homer in the person of Plato; scholasticism, less happily endowed in some respects, and menaced with a more speedy decline, experienced to a still greater degree the need of a similar consolation. The poet who was to come had then his place marked in time; we must look for the causes which allotted to him his place in space; his period known, we have still to make apprehended the intellectual condition of his country.

CHAPTER III.

ESPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ITALIAN PHILOSOPHY.

THREE inseparable things, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, appeal to the soul of man, both through his feelings of their actual absence, and through his hope of their possible attainment. The desire for the Good was the first concern of the first wise men, and philosophy in its origin as its name imports (Φιλοσοφία), was the work of love.[1] But, as the Good, to be accomplished, must first be perceived as the True, uncertainty in practice called for the aid of speculation: it was necessary to study beings in order to determine the laws which link them together. One could not approach the True without being struck by its splendor, which is the Beautiful; the harmony of beings, reflected in the conceptions of the learned, was naturally reproduced even in their discourses. The philosophy of the earlier times was, then, moral in its direction and poetic in its form.

Such, as the product of the Pythagorean school, did it first appear in Italy. Soon cities asked from it laws for their guidance and later, the metaphysicians of Elea and Empedocles of Agrigentum sang the mysteries of nature in the language of the gods. Then Rome arose, and, as its name imported (Ρώμη), Rome was strength; that strength, put into action, became the empire of the world. The Roman people were then pre-eminently endowed with the genius of action. However, the feeling for art was not lacking to them: they required harmonious words in their rostrum and canticles for their triumphs. When they accepted philosophy, she was presented to them under the auspices of Scipio and Ennius, and thus found herself pledged to serve and to please[1]; in after days she never ceased to avail herself of the patronage of statesmen and of poets. She visited the retreat of Cicero, accompanied Seneca into exile, died with Thrasea, dictated to Tacitus, reigned with Marcus Aurelius, and sat in the school of the jurisconsults who referred the entire science of things divine and human to the determination of good and evil.[2] She had invited to her lessons Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan.[3] The systems of Zeno and of Epicurus readily resolvable into moral consequences, and the traditions of Pythagoras bearing the impress of ineffaceable beauty, alone obtained the right of citizenship in Rome. Christianity came again to fecundate the soil of Italy, which so many illustrious travails seemed necessarily to have exhausted. After Pantaenus, the Sicilian bee and the founder of the Christian school of Alexandria; after Lactantius and St. Ambrose, the genius of the old Romans revived in the sixth and seventh centuries in two of their most noble descendants, Boethius and St. Gregory. The first named, a martyr to civil courage, lent to philosophy a consolatory and harmonious diction; the latter, an indefatigable pontiff, has left as monuments in the history of the human mind his admirable treatises on the Holy Scriptures, and the system of chant which still retains his name. In later times, the Italian sun did not cease to shine upon generations of philosophers, moralists, jurisconsults, publicists, and poets who esteemed it an honor to be accounted philosophers. We find Marsilius Ficinus confounding in his neo-Platonic enthusiasm science, art, and virtue; Macchiavelli, whom it suffices to name; Vico and Gravina tracing the fundamental laws of society, the one with hieroglyphic symbols, the other with the same pen that later will write out the statutes of the Arcadian Academy; also Petrarch, crowned at the Capitol, but descending its steps to meditate by the light of his solitary lamp upon "the remedies against both kinds of fortune," Tasso, resting from the combats of the *Jerusalem Delivered* in the composition of admirable dialogues, and, if we may be permitted to cite celebrities more recent and not less beloved, Manzoni and Pellico.

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[1] The Latin word *studium* also has two senses, the one intellectual, and the other moral.

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[1] Polybius, *Exempl. Virt. et Vit.* cap. LXXIII.—Pers., *Sat.*, VI. 10.

[2] Lib. I., Digest., *de Justitiâ et Jure.* "Veram philosophiam, non simulatam adfectantes."

[3] Virg., *Aen.*, I. and VI.—Horat., lib. II. *Ep.*, 2; lib. I. *Ep.*, 4.—Ovid., *Metam.*, lib. XV.—Lucan, *Pharsal.*, lib. I., no. II.

We may then recognize among the philosophers of the other side of the Alps, a twofold character, ancient, permanent, and so to speak, national; for the permanence of habits, which constitutes personality with regard to individuals, constitutes also nationality in regard to populations. We may then say that there exists an Italian philosophy which has been able to maintain in their primitive alliance, moral tendencies and poetic form, whether it be that in that land so favored by heaven, in the presence of an external nature so wonderfully endowed, man also carries into his action a larger share of vivacity and felicity, or whether again, a design from on high so made Italy, that it might be the chief seat of the Catholic Faith, in which was to be found a philosophy at once pre-eminently practical and poetical, a union and a realization of the fundamental ideas of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful.

II. In the Middle Ages, Italian philosophy was neither less flourishing nor less faithful to its twofold character. At the close of the ages of barbarian incursion, the Blessed Lanfranc and St. Anselm, who respectively went from Pavia and Aosta to occupy the primatial see of Canterbury, inaugurated the revival of the regenerated studies in northern Europe. Peter the Lombard was borne by universal admiration from his professor's chair to the bishopric of Paris. Whilst John Italus made his name honored in the school of Constantinople, Gerard of Cremona, established at Toledo, was interrogating the learning of the Arabs, and teaching the Spaniards to enrich themselves with the scientific spoils of their enemies. Bologna was the seat of an instructor in philosophy not lacking renown, even before the lessons in jurisprudence began, which conferred such celebrity upon that city. Logic and physics continued to be assiduously taught there in the thirteenth century. Padua had no reason to envy her rival.[1] Milan numbered nearly two hundred teachers of grammar, logic, medicine, and philosophy.[2] Finally the fame of the thinkers of the Peninsula was so great in all parts of the continent that it served to account for the origin of newly arisen doctrines, for example, to explain how Arnold of Villeneuve passed for an adept of a Pythagorean sect disseminated through the principal cities of Apulia and Tuscany.[3] But the exuberant vigor of Italian philosophy showed itself especially in the memorable struggle which began between the orthodox systems and opposing theories, a struggle which, like the contest between the priesthood and the empire, lasted more than two hundred years. We might perhaps find interesting matter for research in the doctrines of the Fraticelli, of Guillemin of Milan, and of the Spiritual Brothers, among whom the absolute community of all things, the emancipation of women in regard to religion, and the preaching of an eternal gospel, recall the modern efforts of Saint-Simonism. But, restricting ourselves to facts purely philosophical, we meet with matters still more surprising. In the year 1115, the Epicureans were numerous enough in Florence to form a faction to be dreaded and to provoke bloody quarrels;[1] later, materialism appeared there as the avowed doctrine of sundry prominent Ghibellines. The grandsons of Averroes were received at the Italian court of the Hohenstaufen[2] at the same time that a Saracen colony was founded at Nocera, making Rome tremble. Frederic II. rallied around him every perverted opinion, and seemed desirous of establishing a school antagonistic to Catholic teaching. This school, silenced for a time after the fall of the dynasty which had protected it, regained strength under another emperor, Louis of Bavaria, who crossed the Alps to receive the crown from the hand of an anti-pope. A little later, Petrarch, quoting St. Paul and St. Augustine in his discourses, excited a disdainful smile on the lips of the learned men by whom he was surrounded, adorers of Aristotle and of the Arabian commentators.[3] These irreligious doctrines made no delay in reducing themselves to learned pleasures of the senses: they found poets to sing them. However, the truth did not remain without defenders; two men were raised up in its behalf, whom we have already met among the greatest of their day, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura, who must here again be called to mind as two of the glories of Italy. Profound moralists, they were also poetically inspired, one, when he composed the hymns which were one day to make Santeuil despair, and the other, when he penned the canticle translated by Corneille. Ægidius Colonna also combatted Averroïsm with the same pen which traced the lessons to kings. Albertano of Brescia published three treatises on ethics, in the vulgar tongue.[1] We might cite still others, who were lauded in their own day, and who have experienced how far the plaudits of men are deceptive.

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[1] Tiraboschi. t. iv.. lib. ii., cap. ii.

[2] Flamma, a Milanese chronicler, quoted by Tiraboschi, *ibid.*

[3] Vincent de Beauvais and Brucker, *Hist. crit.*, Vol. iii., bk. ii., chap. iii.

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[1] Giovanni Villani, History, bk. iv.

[2] Ægidius Romanus, *Quodlibeta*, lib. ii., quaest. 20.—Cf. Reinaud, *Extraits des historiens arabes*, p. 435.

[3] Petrarch, quoted by Tiraboschi, Vol. v.

But, of all the cities seated at the foot of the Appenines, none could boast of a happier fecundity than the fair city of Florence. Torn by intestine commotions, if she gave birth amid pain and sorrow, at least she brought forth immortal children. Without counting Lapo Fiorentino, who taught philosophy at Bologna, and Sandro of Pipozzo, author of a treatise on economy which had a success of popularity, she numbered among her sons Brunetto Latini and Guido Cavalcanti. Brunetto, notary of the republic, had been able, without neglecting his patriotic functions, usefully to serve the cause of learning: he translated into Italian the Ethics of Aristotle; he prepared. under the name of *Trésor*, an encyclopædia of the knowledge of his day, and in his *Tesoretto* he gave an example of didactic poetry lacking neither precision of thought nor grace of expression. Guido Cavalcanti was saluted as the Prince of the Lyre: a sonnet on love, composed by him, obtained the honor of several commentaries, to which the most revered theologians did not disdain to lend a hand. He would have been admired as a philosopher, if his orthodoxy had remained irreproachable.[1] Two citizens of such ability sufficed to honor a city already famous; and yet a third was to appear who would make later times forget them both.

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[1] *Dell'amore e dilezione di Dio. Della consolazione del consiglio. Ammaestramento di dire e di tacere.*

III. The philosophy of the thirteenth century was then to ask from Italy the required poet; but Italy was to furnish him marked with the national imprint. equally provided with contemplative and with active faculties. and not less eminently endowed with the moral instincts than with the feeling and capacity for literary creation. It was needful to find a soul in which these dispositions, united by nature, should be largely developed by the trials of a life providentially predestined, a soul which, faithful to impressions received from without, should, moreover, possess the energy necessary to combine, and, in due season, bring them forth.

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[1] Boccaccio, quoted by Sismondi. *Histoire des republiques italiennes*, Vol. iv., p. 199.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE, STUDIES, AND GENIUS OF DANTE.—GENERAL DESIGN OF THE DIVINE COMEDY.—PLACE OCCUPIED IN IT BY THE PHILOSOPHICAL ELEMENT.

IN the year 1265, under sinister auspices, and in the house of an exile, a child was born—Dante Alighieri. Memorable events surrounded his cradle: the crusade of Tunis, the end put to the second interregnum by the election of Rudolph of Hapsburg, the second Council of Lyons, the Sicilian Vespers, the death of Ugolino—such were the possible topics of conversation to which his ears were first opened. He saw his country divided between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines: the former were the defenders of Italian independence and municipal liberties; the latter were the champions of feudal rights and the old suzerainty of the Holy Empire. His family traditions and his own inclinations attached him to the cause of the Guelfs; [1] he donned the garb of manhood fighting in their ranks at Campaldino, where they were victorious (1289). Soon after, he shared in the dissensions which divided the dominant party, when, under the stormy tribunate of Giano della Bella (1292), the constitutions of the city were modified, the nobles excluded from the magistracy, and the interests of the republic placed in the hands of the plebeians. Entrusted successively with several embassies, when he returned to his own country the highest honors and the greatest perils alike awaited him. When he was made prior, (1300), he found the nobles and the plebeians re-commencing the struggle under the new names of Neri and Bianchi; his sympathy with the latter procured for him the enmity of the former. While he was on the way to Rome to oppose their influence, they called to Florence Charles of Valois, brother to Philip the Fair; it seemed that a prince of a reigning house was none too exalted a personage to be employed in the struggle against a great citizen. The prince carried the day, but he dishonored himself and the French name when he caused a sentence of proscription to be pronounced against the chiefs of the Bianchi. Under the shadow of the French lilies two solemn iniquities, in the lapse of a few months, were accomplished in Italy: the exile of Dante and the seizure of Boniface VIII.[1] Dante uttered maledictions upon his judges, but not upon his country; the memory he retained of her accompanied him as he wandered from city to city, and as he sat by the hearth-stones of the Marquises of Lunigiana, of the Scaligeri at Verona, or of the lords of Polenta, a sombre guest, always finding the bread of hospitality bitter. Now by force, and anon by entreaty, by every way except by such as might imply a loss of self-respect,[1] he attempted to re-enter within the dearly loved walls, the fold that had sheltered his early years.[2] And, when his disappointed hope left him no other resource, if he seemed to pass into the camp of the Ghibellines, it was because he thought there to find that very cause of liberty to aid which he had fought against them; in fact, the intervention of France, solicited through the imprudence of the Guelfs, menaced Italy with a new peril. Or rather, these two names of rival factions had several times changed meaning amid intestine struggles; they continued as words of ominous augury, inscribed on standards which thenceforth rallied round them little more than selfish interests, passions, and crimes. Dante never ceased to blend in a common reprobation the excesses of both parties,[3] and to look to some loftier sphere for social doctrines worthy of his devotion. The urgent call he experienced to intervene in the affairs of his time, which had brought upon him such singular misfortunes, never left him; he had just returned from the fulfilment of a diplomatic mission to Venice, when he died at Ravenna, (1321). The tumult of men and things was not lacking to his later days: there were the revolutions which changed into seigniorial governments the greater number of the Italian republics, the popular triumphs in Flanders and Switzerland, the wars in Germany, the strife between France and England, the pontifical majesty outraged at Anagni, the condemnation of the Templars, and the removal of the Holy See to Avignon. These tragic spectacles, which would have left profound images in the memory of Dante if he had remained merely a witness of them, must, when he took part in them, have powerfully affected his conscience; for the moral sense, which is awakened by the aspect of the just and the unjust, is exalted by adherence to the former, as also by experiencing the oppression of the latter.

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[1] Pelli, *Memorie per la Vita di Dante*; Lionardo Aretino, *Vita di Dante.*

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[1] Giov. Villani, lib. vii, ann. 1292; Dino Compagni, in Muratori.

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[1] *Memorie.*—M. Villemain was the first to make known in France the admirable letter wherein the poet refuses to re-enter his native city under humiliating conditions. But nowhere has the history of his exile been traced in a livelier and more lucid way than in the biography issued by M. Fauriel. See also the learned work of Balbo, *Vita di Dante*, and the *Vie de Dante*, by M. Artaud.

[2] Paradiso, XXV., 2, Longfellow's Tr.

"The fair sheepfold, where a lamb I slumbered."

[3] Paradiso, VI., 34:

"So that 'tis hard to see which sins the most."

He had known evil through suffering, the chief school in which virtuous men learn it; he had known good by the joy felt in doing it; he had willed it with an ardent, and consequently with a communicative will. In after years the remembrance of his generous intentions was for him as a companion of exile, in whose converse he found the justification of his political conduct, and the excuse for, as well as the consolation of, his misfortunes.[1]

II. But, to be conceived in exile and therein to die, to occupy lofty positions and to undergo great misfortunes, has been the lot of many; these are the points which Dante has in common with the crowd of men, and he might be confounded with them if, amid the agitations of his public life, other circumstances had not procured for him a life of the heart, into the mysteries of which we must penetrate. In fact, according to the laws regulating the spiritual world, to lift up a soul there is need of another soul; this attraction is called love; in the language of philosophy, it is known as friendship, and in that of Christianity, charity. Dante was not to be exempt from the common law. At the age of nine years, an age of which the innocence guarantees the purity, he met at a family festival, a young child endowed with grace and nobleness.[1] The sight called forth in him an affection which has no name on this earth, and which he preserved still more and more tender and chaste through the perilous season of adolescence. There were dreams wherein Beatrice showed herself all radiant; there was an inexpressible desire to find himself where she was about to pass; it was a salutation from her, an inclination of her head, in which he had placed all his happiness; there were fears and hopes, sadnesses and joys, which wrought upon and purified his sensibility, until it reached an extreme delicacy, disengaging it little by little from ordinary habits and cares. But above all, when Beatrice quitted the earth in the full splendor of youth, he followed her in thought into that invisible world of which she had become an inhabitant, and delighted in adorning her with all the blooms of immortality; he surrounded her with the canticles of the angels; he seated her on the highest ste leading to the throne of God. He forgot her death while contemplating her in this glorious transfiguration.[1] Thus the beauty that had shown itself to him under a real form became a real type which interpenetrated his imagination, that imagination which was to mount higher and higher until it flowed over upon the outside world. He knew how to tell what was passing within him; he knew, according to his own expression, to take note of love singing within: Dante had become a poet.[2] When once inspiration had visited him, he found, amid the favorable circumstances of his position, no difficulty in retaining his visitor by his side: the contemporary of Guido Cavalcanti, of Giacopo de Todi, of Dante da Majano, of Cino da Pistoia, men whose poetic utterances called forth similar strains from their fellows, and were re-echoed among themselves as if in endless concert; the friend of the musician Casella, of the architect Arnolfo, and of the painter Giotto, he lived in the days when Florence raised three of the monuments which have caused that city to be surnamed "The

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[1] Inferno, XXVIII., 39.

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[1] Boccacio, *Vita di Dante*; Dante, *Vita Nuova*.

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[1] *Vita Nuova*, C. E. Norton's translation:

"Unto the high heaven hath Beatrice gone,
Unto that realm where peace the angels have,
* * * * * * *
And dwelleth glorious in a fit abode."

[2] Purgatorio, XXIV., 19.

Beautiful," the Pallazzo Vecchio, Santa Croce, and the Cathedral, and all this under an enchanting sky over-arching a land where every art flourished.

III. All this was not yet enough, and Dante was to offer himself to the wonder of posterity under still another aspect. Brunetto Latini, who had known him from his birth and had drawn his horoscope, felt desirous of verifying its predictions; he became his master, and filled the place of the father lost at an early age; he taught him the rudiments of the different sorts of learning collected in his *Trésor*.[1] Through his care Dante was early initiated into familiarity with the languages. He was not wholly ignorant of Greek, and, if he had not acquired in it sufficient proficiency to be able easily to read the original texts, translations were not lacking.[2] Latin literature was familiar to him; among the authors whose daily converse accompanied his solitude, he counted Virgil, whose *Æneid* he knew from beginning to end, Ovid, Lucan, Statius, Pliny, Frontinus, and Paulus Orosius. The different Romanic idioms had occupied his attention; he quoted Spanish verses and wrote Provençal poetry;[1] there is no doubt that he knew French, "the speaking of which was already accounted delightful to hear, and the most common to all nations."[2] But it was especially in exploring the dialects of Italy that he exerted his indefatigable perseverance; to have consecrated the use of the vulgar tongue was by no means the least glorious of his achievements.[3] Rhetoric and history, physics and astronomy, which he pursued down to the latest discoveries of the Arabian observers, claimed also a portion of his time. Obliged to choose among the various arts under which the inhabitants of Florence were classified, he inscribed himself in the corporation of physicians. This rank was not wrongfully assumed, and yet the variety of his acquirements would have permitted him to take without injustice the title of jurisconsult.[4] His youth had passed away amid these wide-reaching preparations; the death of Beatrice (1292) induced him to seek consoling thoughts in the writings of Cicero and Boethius. He there found more—the first vestiges of a science to which he had not yet attained, which apparently was thus lying in wait for him at the close of his preliminary studies—philosophy. From that period he pursued this study by attending the public discussions of such as were accounted philosophers, in monastic schools, in reading so assiduously that his eyesight was for a long time injured by his excessive application, and in meditations which no outside tumult could distract.[1] The two translations of Aristotle, perhaps some of the dialogues of Plato, St Augustine and St Gregory the Great, Avicenna and the book *De Causis*, St. Bernard, Richard of St. Victor, St. Thomas Aquinas, Ægidius Colonna,—such were the guides whose footsteps his indefatigable thought eagerly followed. And yet, at the very entrance of metaphysics, the mystery of creation stayed him a long while, occasioned him at first some disquiet, and made him turn in preference to ethics.[2]

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[1] Inferno, XV., 19, 28, 41. Cary's translation:

"'If thou,' he answered, 'follow but thy star,
Thou canst not miss at last a glorious haven;
Unless in fairer days my judgment erred.'
* * * * 'In my mind
Is fixed, and now strikes full upon my heart,
The dear benign, paternal image, such
As thine was, when so lately thou didst teach me
The way for men to win eternity.'
* * * 'I commend my *Treasure* to thee.'"

[2] He quotes Greek etymologies quite happily in his dedication of the Paradiso to Can Grande, and in the Convito, lib. IV., cap. VI. See also the sonnet LXIV., Fraticelli's edition;

"Morning and evening place thee at thy desk."

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[1] Dante, *De Vulgari Eloquentia* passim. The second canzone of book II. of his collection is in Provencal, Latin, and Italian.

[2] Brunetto Latini, preface of the *Trésor*.

[3] This is the special subject of his treatise, *De Vulgari Eloquentia*.

[4] *Memorie*. Purgatorio, XXV. See the learned dissertation of Varchi on this passage, and the whole book *De Monarchia*.

At the end of thirty months, philosophy had become his exclusive mistress, to use his own form of speech, the lady of his thoughts. Then he began to find the intellectual sphere wherein he had essayed his first flight too restricted; he visited the Universities of Italy and of the lands beyond the Alps, in search of that exchange of the living word, the benefit of oral teaching, which, better than the dead letter of the most renowned writings, possesses the gift of fecundating the mind. Similar motives had led the sages of Greece to the schools of Phœnicia and Egypt. However, the dates and the limits of Dante's travels elude all certain determination. Several cities of the Peninsula, Padua, Cremona, Bologna, and Naples, claim the honor of having counted him in the number of their students, and the most illustrious provinces of Christendom, Germany and France, Flanders and England, have given testimony of their desire that he should have passed their way. There is apparently a possibility of tracing in his writings an itinerary which, passing through Arles, Paris, Bruges, and London, may have extended as far as Oxford.[1] But we can scarcely doubt the fact of his sojourn in Paris. There in the *Rue de Fouarre*, and seated on the straw which served as benches to the crowd of students, he, an immortal disciple, attended the lessons of the professor, Sigier, whom his mention alone rescued from oblivion, until in our day, a learned hand appeared to retrace the nearly obliterated memory.[2] There, doubtless after long vigils, when he deemed he had won the right to aspire to the honors of the school, he sustained, with the customary solemnities, a theological dispute, *de quolibet* wherein he replied without interruption upon fourteen questions, drawn from divers subjects, and proposed, with their arguments for and against, by skilful doctors. He also read and commented in public the Master of the Sentences and the Holy Scriptures, passing through all the probations required in the department of theology. Admitted to the highest rank, he lacked the means necessary to defray the cost of reception.[1] The doors of the University were closed against him, as were the gates of his native city, and thus even science had for him a rigorous treatment. If he left Paris without the title of which he had been judged worthy, he was at least in possession of an incontestable erudition and a love for serious study; and if, as we may well believe, the lustre of Academic triumphs was not indifferent to him, his wishes were gratified in the end. After twenty years of exile (1320), grown grey with age, surrounded by the twofold majesty of renown and of misfortune, we find him in the church of St. Helen, at Verona, in presence of an admiring audience, sustaining a thesis *de duobus*

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[1] Dante, Convito, lib. II., cap. XIII. ; lib. III., cap. IX.

[2] Convito, IV., I.

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[1] Inferno, IX., 38; XII., 40; XV., 2; Paradiso, X., 47; etc., etc.

[2] Paradiso, X., 46: L.

"It is the light eternal of Sigier,
Who, reading lectures in the street of Straw,
Did syllogize invidious verities."

The biography of Sigier, which Italian learning had despaired of elucidating, has been recovered with rare precision by the researches of M.

Victor Leclerc, president of the commission of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-lettres for the continuation of the *Histoire littéraire de France*. It is to be found in volume XXI. of that collection.

[1] Boccaccio. *Vita di Dante*. John of Serravalle, Bishop of Imola in his commentary quoted by Tiraboschi, vol. V.

elementis aquæ et terræ. One year later, when his obsequies were celebrated at Ravenna, Guido Novello, Lord of Polenta, his last protector, caused a crown of laurel to be placed upon his bier.[1]

Dante had then lived, so to speak, a third life, which was devoted to scientific labors, and which also had its unequal phases, its sad and its serene days. Political passions and the affections of the heart had not sufficed to occupy his whole being; there remained in his soul a large place, inaccessible to the tumult of opinions and the seduction of the senses, within which his intellect retired as within a sanctuary, and rendered unto truth an exclusive worship. This devotion was not restricted to the limits of any single order of knowledge; it embraced truth, absolute and complete. Universality of knowledge and elevation of the point of view—are not these the constituent elements of the philosophic mind?

IV. Thus in the person of Dante were found the three faculties which, united in certain proportions, constitute genius, namely, intellect to perceive, imagination to idealize, and will to execute. The task still remains to tell by what mysterious bonds these faculties were interwoven into a perfect unity; how three destinies weighed upon a single head which they might bow, but could not crush. While our ordinary education, by giving to each one of our faculties a separate and sometimes an exclusive cultivation, often divides and enfeebles them, Dante, a bold and independent genius, allowed his to grow and develop all together, to borrow resources from one another, and occasionally to interchange *roles* in a way to present the most interesting contrasts. Now it is the statesman who speaks with the tongue of the sage or the muse to princes and to nations that have closed their ears to their customary counsellors.[1] Again, it is the poet, who, amid the austere occupations of science, has not lost the delicate sense of the beauties of nature, the quickness to generous emotions, the ingenuous credulity which provokes a smile; he bends in loving reverence before the classic virtues of Cato; he believes in the bucklers which Numa saw falling from heaven, and in the geese of the Capitol.[2] But especially do we find him a philosopher, bearing with him a religious gravity to aid in the accomplishment of his poetic work, in the seclusion of studious habits, waiting for inspiration, concealing a learned reminiscence or the conclusion of a long chain of reasoning under the boldest images, ready to give a reason for every line that has ever flowed from his pen: his scruples carried him so far that he desired to explain *ex-professo*, by a rigorous logical analysis, the ballads and sonnets wherein his youthful vigor had made its first essay.[3] Strong with that real strength which is not rigidity, which is supple because it is living, Dante knew how to take his share in the needs and duties of life, and then to make his wide experiences converge in unwearying devotion to his more especial occupations. He never deemed that application to letters constituted a species of priesthood exempt from public burdens; he did not deprive his country of his time that he might make for himself a life of selfish leisure. His eloquence, never prodigally expended, flowed freely forth in the councils, as did his blood under the standard of his native city. It was this desire to multiply himself in a certain fashion for the general good, ordinarily confided to inexpert hands, which made him exclaim, when hesitating whether or not to accept a certain diplomatic mission: "If I stay, who goes? and if I go, who stays?"[1]

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[1] *Memorie.*

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[1] De Monarchia; Purgatorio, VI.; Paradiso, VI., etc.

[2] Purgatorio, I; Convito, IV., 5, 28: "O most sacred breast of Cato, who will dare to speak of thee?" De Monarchia, II.

[3] *Vita Nuova*, passim. Lionardo Aretino, *Vita di Dante.*

He also knew how to fulfil the gentle requirements of social life. Friendship found him faithful to its demands; his melancholy countenance brightened in the society of women and young people; friends vaunted the grace of his manners and the courtesy of his speech amid such surroundings. As he did not hide himself in haughty retirement, neither did he intrench himself in the domain where he was sure of reigning; he did not disdain to cultivate arts, such as music and drawing, in which he could readily meet with others more skilled than himself.[2] However, a rare temperance, a self-possession that could seize upon the most fleeting opportunities for learning, an attention so rapt that nothing could deprive it of its prey, and finally, a memory to which the mournful necessity of re-learning anything was unknown, permitted him to pursue his favorite studies, and made it seem as if time were less avaricious of hours to him than to other men. Thus he was seen sitting in the principal street of Sienna, bending over a book, totally absorbed during the entire continuance of a public festival, of which he seemed not even to be aware.

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[1] Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*: "S'io sto chi va? e s'io vo chi sta?"

[2] Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*. Villani somewhere mentioning him, calls

But, as human nature must always betray in some spot the original wound by which it has been weakened, the noble qualities of Dante were occasionally dishonored by their own very excesses. Amid civil feuds his hatred of iniquity became a blind rage which could no longer grant pardon even to mistakes. Under such circumstances it is said that, in the confusion of his thoughts, he would throw stones at women and children whom he heard calumniating his party. Or again, when in a philosophic discussion he foresaw certain objections on the part of his adversaries, he gave vent to his indignation by saying: "Such brutal doctrines ought to be met, not with arguments, but with a

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him (History, Bk. IX., chap. cxxxiv.), "An ungracious philosopher." But we may well believe that he represents the poet in his darker moments; those, for instance, which he was obliged to pass among courtiers and buffoons, at the courts of some of the great lords. See also *Memorie per la Vita di Dante*, Pelli.

knife."[1] Likewise, his extreme sensibility, although protected by the memory of Beatrice, made but a feeble resistance to the seductions of beauty: the collections of his lyrics has kept the traces of these passing affections, which he vainly endeavored half-way to veil by ingenious interpretations.[2] Even study, the refuge of so many sorely tempted souls, had snares for him. The knowledge of oneself, so highly recommended by antique wisdom, is not without danger for great men; it exposes them to share by anticipation in the admiration of posterity. The friends of Dante have regretted that he did not leave to them the entire care of his fame; we are pained when we see him anxious for honors scarcely worthy of him. It is impossible not to recognize in his writings a learning sometimes inopportune, which solicits applause by occasioning surprise, and locutions voluntarily obscure which humiliate the simplicity of the reader. These faults bear their own penalty with them; for by rendering their author less accessible, they sometimes deprive him of the familiar and effectionate homage proffered by the lips of the masses of his fellow-beings.[3]

And yet these weaknesses, to make themselves forgotten, are possessed of a wonderful secret—*repentance.* In the thirteenth century the art, now so common, of endeavoring to legitimate vice by the advancement of easy-going doctrines, was but little known. Men then came, sooner or later, to ask at the hands of religion, the expiation and the grace of which she is the ever-enduring dispensatrix. And thus did our poet. In one of his most beautiful cantos he represents himself "with downcast eyes like to a child confessing its faults," acknowledging in the face of all the ages the errors of his youth.[1] Later, he left as his last will and testament the hymn to the Blessed Virgin, wherein he offers tears from his heart as the ransom for the evil days that he had lived. He wished to be garbed on his bier in the habit of St. Francis.[2] Anything farther is the secret of God, who alone could judge that character, one of the greatest that ever came forth from His creative hand to play its part here below. His contemporaries failed to comprehend him. Their wonder found expression in fabulous tales, and Dante had his legend. A prophetic dream was spoken of, sent to his mother on the eve of his birth; the reality of his journeys through the realm of the dead was positively affirmed; a double miracle was said to have preserved his poem, twice lost; several days after leaving the earth he was announced as having appeared, crowned with a luminous aureole.[1] If he was not permitted to share in the incense offered to the saints, that due to poets was never lacking to him.

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[1] Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*; Convito, IV., 14.

[2] Canzoni, *passim*; Convito, II. Dionisi gravely maintains the hypothesis which makes of the loves of Dante so many allegories, and of Gentucca, simply a figure of the party of the Bianchi.

[3] Inferno, XXXIV., 30; Purgatorio, II., 1, etc., etc.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxx., 36; xxxi., 12, 22, etc. See also *ibid.*, 14. He confesses himself inclined to pride, *ibid.*, xiii., 43; and to anger, xv. *in fine.*

[2] See the sonnet, "O Mother of Virtue!" See also *Memorie per la Vita di Dante*

To the divers vicissitudes, political, poetic, and scientific. through which Dante passed, correspond three sorts of works, revealing his indefatigable activity: 1st, the treatise *De Monarchia*, a learned theory of the constitution of the Holy Empire, which, binding the organization of Christian Europe to the traditions of the ancient Roman Empire, looked for the ultimate origin of power and of society in the depths of the designs of Providence: 2d, the *Rime*, or lyric compositions, the *Vita Nuova*, an ingenuous confession of the youthful life of the author, and the two books *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, a sketch of the philological labors by means of which he was enabled to make of the vulgar idiom, until then disdained, an instrument worthy of expressing the noblest aspirations: 3d, the *Convito*, or banquet, wherein he proposes to place within the reach of the mass of men the bread, but too rare, of knowledge, and scatters abroad with a liberal and beneficent hand the philosophical ideas gathered by him in communion with the sages of antiquity and the doctors of later times.[2] These were all simply preludes or episodes. The entirety of his genius was to be brought forth in a unique work: the *Divine Comedy* was conceived.

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[1] Boccaccio, *Vita*; Benvenuto da Imola, *Præfatio ad Divin. Comoed.*

[2] We must add to these his Latin Eclogues, published by Dionisi, and his thesis, *de duobus Elementis*, printed twice at Venice, in 1508 and 1708. These small works are not included in the edition issued by Zatta.

V. The frame-work of the *Divine Comedy* was to be drawn from the usages of the period and the examples afforded by the ancients, or rather, from the entire past of poetry. Poetry, in its noblest flight, is an intuition of the infinite; it is the perception of God in creation: the unchangeable destiny of man represented amid the vicissitudes of history

This is why it appears at its origin clothed with a sacerdotal character, taking its part in prayer and in religious instruction; and this is, also, why, even in times of decadence, the employment of the marvellous remains one of the privileges, even precepts, of the poetic art. Thus, in pagan days, the great Oriental compositions, such as the Mahabharata; the Greek cycles, such as those of Hercules, Theseus, Orpheus, Ulysses, Psyche; the Latin epics of Virgil, Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus; and finally, works which may be called philosophical poems, such as the *Republic* of Plato and that of Cicero, all had their journeys to heaven, their descents into hell, their necromancies, and their dead resuscitated, or reappearing to tell of the mysteries of the future life. Christianity naturally, and to a still greater degree, favored the intervention of the supernatural in the literature formed under its auspices. From the visions contained in the

Old and New Testaments descended the train of ideas whence arose the first legends; the martyrs were visited in their prisons by prophetic visions; the anchorites of the Thebaïd and the monks of Mt. Athos had narratives to proffer which found echoes in Irish monasteries and the cells of Monte Cassino. The Provençal Troubadours, the *Trouvères* of France, the German Meistersingers, and the later Scandinavian Skalds availed themselves of the data furnished by the hagiographers, and added to them the charms of rhythm and of song. Nothing was more famous in the thirteenth century than were the dreams of St. Perpetua and St. Cyprian, the pilgrimage of St. Macarius the Roman to the terrestrial paradise, the trance of the young Alberic, the purgatory of St. Patrick, and the miraculous voyages of St. Brendan. Thus, numerous examples and contemporary literary usages corresponded with the Faith, which shows us the eternal regions as the country of the soul, the natural dwelling-place of thought. Dante understood this, and, overstepping the limitations of space and time to enter into the triple kingdom of which the gates are opened by death, he placed the scene of his poem, from its primal conception, in the realm of the infinite.[1]

There he found himself on the meeting-ground of all generations, in possession of a horizon which will be that of the Last Judgment, embracing within its limits all the families of the human race. He was present at the final solution of the enigma of revolutions. He judged the nations and the leaders of the nations; he stood in the place of Him who will one day cease to be patient, and he dispensed, according to his own will, the awards in the treasury of recompense and punishment. He took the opportunity of setting forth with epic grandeur his political theories, and of executing, with that rod of satire which prophets have not disdained to wield, his scheme of pitiless retribution.[1] And there, as a traveller whose arrival is duly awaited, he was met by Beatrice, who had preceded him but a short time; he beheld her such as his fairest dreams had represented her; he had his share in her triumph. This celestial triumph had, perhaps, been the primal and generating idea of the Divine Comedy, conceived as an elegy wherein should be reflected the sorrows and the consolations of a pious love.[2] In short, all things appeared to him from their proper point of view; he overlooked creation, of which no corner, however obscure, could escape his glance; he felt impelled to show the prodigious variety of his learning and the profundity of his views; as a didactic poet, he could here sketch out the entire system of an admirable philosophy.

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[1] On the poetic antecedents of the *Divine Comedy* there exists an interesting but too brief dissertation by Foscolo, Edinburgh Review, vol. xxx.

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[1] Psalms, *passim*; Isaias, xliv., 12; etc.

[2] Dante, *Vita Nuova, in fine:* "A wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things that made me resolve to speak no more of this blessed one (Beatrice) until I could more worthily treat of her."

Now, philosophy, with the severity of its learned forms, could occupy only a restricted space, and did not readily unite with the other elements of the poem; some means was needed by the aid of which it might be transformed, and, by an intimate transfusion, be felt in every part of the whole. This means was symbolism, a philosophical method of procedure, since it rests upon the incontrovertible law of the association of ideas, and it is, besides, eminently poetical; for, while prose places immediately under the sign of the word the thought to be conveyed, poetry places there *images*, which are themselves signs of a still higher thought. But the image destined thus to serve as a middle term between the word and the thought, ought not to be carelessly chosen; still less ought it to be composed of fantastic features, capriciously combined. The required image must be sought for in the order of realities, that it may offer a faithful analogy with the idea which it represents, that indeed, according to the original force of the word (σὺμβολου) one may really find it a symbol—that is, a throwing or bringing together. Combinations of this sort are abundant in nature—the song of the birds is the sign of the day, and the first blooming of a flowering plant that of the season; the shadow of a reed on the sand measures the height of the sun in the heavens. The poets of the olden times felt these universal harmonies; everything appeared to them environed by all its relations; for them every comparison was a serious matter; they regarded as positive beliefs the myths to which they gave ingenious interpretations. So, likewise, in the Holy Scriptures, each event recorded has both a real existence and a figurative signification: each one of its most illustrious personages fulfils at the same time a historic part and a prophetic function. The genius of Dante, nourished on the traditions of the Bible, naturally proceeded in the same manner. The persons whom he places on the scene are real in his thought and significative in his intention; they are incarnate ideas, living symbols.[1] The actions which he imputes to them express the relations of the ideas under the name of which they act. In short, the whole of the Divine Comedy is penetrated by an allegorical teaching which forms its inner life. He himself declares this in the dedication of the Paradiso to Can Grande della Scala: "It must be understood that the sense of this work is not single, but multiple. The first sense is that which is shown under the letter; the second is that which is hidden under the things expressed by the letter; the first is called literal, the second allegorical or moral. According to these considerations, it is evident that the subject must be twofold, that it may lend itself alternately to the two senses indicated. The subject of the work, literally taken, is the state of souls after death; this is the pivotal idea of the poem throughout its entire course. In the allegorical sense, the poet treats of the hell of this world, through which we are journeying as pilgrims, with the power of meriting and demeriting; and the subject is man, inasmuch as by his merits and his demerits he is subjected to the divine justice, remunerative or retributive. The species of philosophy which the author has embraced, is moral philosophy or ethics, for the end which he has proposed to himself is a practical one, and not mere idle speculation; and if in some passages he seems to speculate, it is with a view to application, according to what the philosopher (Aristotle) says in the second book of his Metaphysics: Practical men sometimes indulge in speculation, but in a passing manner, and with a view to subsequent application."[1]

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[1] Thus Rachel and Lia, Mary and Martha, represent for him contemplation and action (Purgatorio, xxvii. 33; Convito iv. 17). Also Peter, James, and John are figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity (Paradiso, xxiv.—xxv.). In the same way, even in his prose writings—as, for instance, in the Convito—he is fond of rendering his idea more striking by taking as types certain poetical personages. He borrows from Statius, Virgil, Ovid, and Lucan, four heroes, that he may the better represent in their persons the characteristics of the four ages of life. (Convito, xxv.—xxviii.)

Giacopo di Dante, as heir to the paternal traditions, develops still more clearly the moral purpose of the poem in the preface of the commentary undertaken by him, the correctness of which is guaranteed by his filial piety: "The whole work is divided into three parts, of which the first is named Hell; the second, Purgatory; the third and last, Paradise. I will begin explaining in a general way, the allegorical character, by saying that the principal design of the author is to show figuratively the three modes of being of the human race. In the first part he considers vice, which he calls Hell, to make us understand that vice is opposed to virtue as to its contrary, as the place chosen for its punishment is named *Inferno*, by reason of its low position, its remoteness from the heights of heaven. The second part has for its subject the transition from vice to virtue, which he names Purgatory, to show the transformation of the soul which is purged of its faults in time, for time is the medium in which every transformation must take place. The third and last part is that wherein he treats of men made perfect, and he calls it Paradise, to express the loftiness of their virtues and the greatness of their happiness, two conditions without which we could not discern the sovereign good. Thus is it that the author proceeds in the three parts of the poem, always by means of the figures employed progressing toward the accomplishment of his design." The earliest commentators adopt and reproduce this explanation.[1]

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[1] *Epist. dedicat. ad Can Grande.*

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[1] Giacopo di Dante comprises in his commentary only the first part of the Divine Comedy. This commentary, valuable through the biographical information it may contain, ought to be brought to light. We found the preface to it, interesting in divers respects, in a manuscript contained in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*. It bears the number 7765.

VI. Before proceeding farther, we shall do well to glance backward for a moment. We have seen how the general transitional movement which was accomplished in European society, from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century, was to make itself felt in the progress of the human mind; how philosophy, having reached the highest point of its scholastic period, felt the need of popular-

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Another beautiful manuscript, numbered 7002, contains the Divine Comedy, preceded by the prefaces of Benvenuto da Imola, and accompanied by the commentary of Giacopo della Lana, the two earliest interpreters who undertook a complete explanation of the poem. The following extracts relate to the subject occupying our attention at the present moment.

Benvenuto da Imola: " The matter or subject of this book is the state of the human soul, both as connected with the human body and as separated from it. As the state of the whole is threefold, so does the author divide his work into three parts. A soul may be in sin; such a one, even while it lives with the body, is, morally speaking, dead, and hence is in the moral Hell; when separated from the body, if it died incurably obstinate, it is in the actual Hell. Again, a soul may be receding from vice; such a one, while still in the body, is in the moral Purgatory, or in the act of penance in which it purges away its sin; if separated, it is in the actual Purgatory. Yet again, a soul may dwell in the perfect habit of virtue; even while living in the body it is already, in a manner, in Paradise, for it exists in as great felicity as is possible in this life of misery; separated from the body, it is in the heavenly Paradise, where there is true and perfect happiness, where it enjoys the vision of God."

Giacopo della Lana: " And since our author, Dante, considers human life to exist in three conditions—the life of the vicious, that of the penitent, izing itself, and of taking on an enduring form in the songs of a poet; how it found the required singer among the pupils of that old Italian school in which the service of the true was never separated from the service of the beautiful and the good; how, finally, the vicissitudes of Dante's life developed in him the threefold sense: moral, æsthetic, and intellectual. This triple germ,

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and that of the virtuous—he has divided his book into three parts, namely, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise."

One might perhaps object to these testimonies the example of Tasso, who also wished to apply to the fictions of the *Jerusalem Delivered* an allegorical sense, justly set aside by his admirers. But this afterthought of Tasso, a caprice of his later days, can, by no means, be compared to the tenacious habits of mind influencing the poet of the thirteenth century, habits betrayed in the first writings of his youth (*Vita Nuova*), set forth without circumlocution in those of his maturity (*Convito*), and several times referred to in the course of the *Divine Comedy* (Inferno, ix. ; Purgatorio, viii.) as if indeed, by a fortunate solicitude, to meet any possible hesitation on the part of future readers.

We will not conclude this note without rectifying an omission which would be unjust. When we were presuming the poetic intentions of Dante to have been almost entirely misunderstood by French critics, we were not acquainted with the dissertation of the late M. Bach on the state of souls after death according to Dante and St. Thomas, nor with the interesting chapter which M. Delecluze devoted to Dante considered as a philosophical poet. (*Florence et ses Vicissitudes*, vol. II.)

which obtained its growth under the influence of a persistent course of culture, was destined to bear wondrous fruit—the *Divine Comedy*; and this fruit, laid open by analysis, was to liberate from its brilliant and odorous envelope the seeds of philosophy therein enclosed.

Thus have we watched the advent of a great man. Like to one of the double-visaged divinities adored by the Romans, he has appeared to us as if looking in two directions—toward the past, of which he is the representative, and again toward the future, of which he is the precursor. His is a generous nature, giving out more than it has received. He is the epitome of an epoch and of a country—to speak in the language of the scholastics, the period and the land are the matter composing him—but he epitomizes them in a powerful personality, and this is the form which constitutes him. We have followed the formation of an immortal book; such works last as long as humanity itself, which they never cease to interest, because they have given expression to an entire phase of human history, and are connected with all that is immutable in the thoughts and affections of the human race. While pointing out some of the sources of the Divine Comedy, we have found them extending back into the farthest depths of history; but we likewise find in the poem the expression of all the subjects of interest—political, literary, and scientific— of contemporaneous society. Also, in the principal work, and in the lesser writings that form its complement, we have traced the presence of a wide philosophical system, the detailed exposition of which must now occupy us, and of which we may lay down beforehand the general characteristics according to the correlated facts which have been the object of our preliminary researches. This philosophy will be eclectic in its doctrines, as were all the most illustrious teachings of the time; poetical in its form and ethical in its direction, as was required by the habits of thought of the nationality to which Dante belonged; it will be like the mind of its author, bold in its flight and encyclopedic in the extent embraced by it. For a philosophical system may be compared to a placid spring of living water: the genius of him who professes it is like the basin containing it and giving to it its configuration, while the circumstances of time and place resemble the atmosphere which environs it, influencing its temperature, and supplying the currents of air by which its surface is ruffled.

PART II.

Exposition of Dante's Philosophical Doctrines.

CHAPTER I.

PROLEGOMENA.

On the threshold of every philosophical system, one inevitable question must be met, and that is, the definition of philosophy itself. To define philosophy, is to determine the place it occupies in the order of our knowledge, the relations it bears to such departments of that knowledge as seem to be most nearly allied to it, the parts of which it is composed, and the method which it pursues.

I.

Dante believed in the maxim common among sages of all periods, and especially dear to poets—that there exists a preestablished harmony between the works of God and the conceptions of men, and that man is an abridgment of the universe. He did not wholly reject confidence in the speculations of astrology which sought to develop this idea by establishing sundry correspondences between the phases of the revolutions of celestial bodies and those of our terrestrial life. As, in the Ptolemaic system, nine heavens, superposed one above the other, environed the earth, throwing light upon all material things, exerting divers influences on the generation of beings, on temperaments, characters, the passions, and other phenomena of the moral world; so, according to the encyclopedic system of Dante, did nine sciences enclose the human mind, illuminating intelligible things, and diffusing fecundity and variety throughout the world of thought. To the seven heavens of the seven planets correspond, by analogies too elaborate to be here treated of, the seven arts of the *trivium* and *quadrivium*. The eighth sphere, with its brilliant stars and its milky way, its two poles visible and invisible, its two motions, brings to mind physics and metaphysics, blending with one another, notwithstanding their unequal lights and their differing tendencies. The crystalline heaven, or *primum mobile*, which carries along with it all the rest, is like to ethics, whence starts the impulse which moves all the other intellectual spheres. And as beyond these material orbs extends the empyrean heaven, pure light, immutable in its repose, so, above all profane sciences, is found theology, where truth reposes in radiant and peaceful obviousness. Physics, metaphysics, and ethics, are, then, the last rounds of the scientific ladder to which our natural powers can attain: we unite the three under the name of philosophy.[1] Philosophy, in the entire sense of its etymology, is still more: it is a sacred affection, a holy love, of which the object is wisdom. And as wisdom and love nowhere exist more perfectly united than in God Himself, it is permitted to say that philosophy is of the divine essence, that it is the eternal thought, the eternal complacency reflected back upon itself, the daughter, the sister, the spouse of the sovereign ruler of the universe.[1]

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[1] Convito, ii. 14.

II.

This idea of philosophy will take shape, and, brought face to face with theology, it will better show us what are the points of contact, and what the points of distinction. "In the midway of this our mortal life," in a dark and lonely forest, wherein through the intoxication of the senses he had gone astray, at the foot of a hill from whose ascent he is barred by the appearance of three monsters, the poet becomes alarmed: the Queen of heaven has seen his plight, and has taken pity on him; she speaks to St. Lucy, who calls upon Beatrice; Beatrice descends from heaven, and Virgil, at her invitation, quits the lower regions; the two will save the wandering poet, by each in turn conducting him on his way through the regions of eternity.[1] The main features of this narration are historical: the wanderings of Dante from the right path, his special devotion towards the Virgin Mother, and the blessed Lucy (formerly so dear to Italian piety); the place which he had awarded to Beatrice in his affections, and to Virgil in his studies. But these real persons are also figures: the poet himself is a complete image of humanity, with its sublime instincts and its inexpressible weaknesses; the Blessed Virgin Mary, so tenderly merciful, represents the divine clemency. This example of contemporary hagiographers, accustomed to look for mysterious virtues in the very names of the saints, authorized the use of the name of Lucy to express illuminating grace.[2] But especially Beatrice, who had happily acquired so great an ascendency over the soul of Dante, who had separated him from the crowd of ordinary minds, who later, by dying, had lifted him in thought to the dwelling-place of the elect, who had appeared to him as a ray of the divine beauty —Beatrice was no longer to be for him a simple daughter of men, but an inspiring intelligence, a tenth muse, the muse who in that age overtopped all the rest, Theology.[3] Last comes Virgil, at that period considered under an aspect not at all familiar to us, as one of the precursors of religious truth in the midst of the pagan world (by reason of his fourth eclogue), and likewise, owing to the exaggerations of his commentators, as the depositary of all the learning of antiquity.[1]

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[1] Convito, ii. 16; iii. 12, 14, 15.—Cf. Hugh of St. Victor; *Eruditionis didascalicae*, lib. I. 3; II. 1. (Throughout Part II. of this work, the reader is asked to bear in mind that the object of the author is to present as exact an analysis of Dante's philosophy as he can gather from the various writings of the Florentine poet. The translator has deemed this reminder useful, from the fact that occasionally the author might be thought to be speaking from himself, whereas he endeavors to be merely the mouthpiece of Dante. Tr.)

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[1] Inferno, i. and ii.; Convito, iv. 24. "The wildering wild-wood of this life."

[2] This is the interpretation of all the commentators.

[3] Passages in which Beatrice is taken as the symbol of Theology. Inferno, ii. 26, 35; Purgatorio, vi., 16; xviii., 16. L.

Virgil, in the eyes of Dante, was master of all human science, that is to say, of philosophy.[2] Thus in the relations of the two

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O Lady of virtue, thou alone through whom
The human race exceedeth all contained
Within the heaven that has the lesser circles!
. . . . .Beatrice, the true praise of God.
. . . . .In so deep a questioning
Do not decide, unless she tell it thee,
Who light 'twixt truth and intellect shall be.
. . . . .What reason seeth here,
Myself can tell thee; beyond that await
For Beatrice, since 'tis a work of faith.

See also Purgatorio, xviii. 25; xxx. 11; xxxi. 12, 37, 41; xxxii. 32; xxxiii. 39; Paradiso, i. 19, 24; iv. 22, 39; xviii. 6; xxviii. 1; xxxi. 28.

[1] See the fragment of a commentary by Bernard de Chartres on the first six books of the Æneid, at the end of the works of Abelard, issued by M. Cousin.

[2] Virgil represents Philosophy: Inferno, i.; iv.; vii.; xi.; Purgatorio, vi.; xviii. L.

. . . . .Famous Sage.
O thou who honorest every art and science.

poetical personages, we must recognize those of the two orders of ideas personified in them.

Now, the divisions of knowledge are like those found in nature; they constitute a chain of which each link closes only after another one has been clasped within it. There is a natural theology which belongs in the domain of philosophical studies; there are philosophical studies, the aid of which is borrowed by theology. Or rather, philosophy has two parts; the first is the preface to, and the second is the commentary on, theology; the first is the anticipation, the second the development, of faith by reason. In the history of the individual man, as in the history of humanity, faith is the primitive fact. It descends by the word into the darkness of our ignorance, it there awakens reason and causes it to pass from potentiality to act; faith, then, by an insensible and continuous influence sustains reason in its unsteady onward way, until, at length, when reason has reached the end of its natural course, faith, making itself visible. receives from it, with its reverential homage, its acquired ideas and its customary forms of

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> . . .That benignant Sage, who all things knew.
>
> O Sun, that healest all distempered vision.
> O light of mine. . . . .
> The lofty Teacher. . . . .
> . . . . .What reason seeth here,
> Myself can tell thee;. . . . .

Explanation of the prophetic sense of the sixth eclogue. Purgatorio, xxii., 24, procedure. Thus, by an admirable concurrence, the education of the intelligence is accomplished. It is according to this broad conception of philosophy that we may explain, in a satisfactory way, the parts played by Virgil and Beatrice. We see why Beatrice, clothed with the authority of faith, descends into the infernal night to bring forth from it Virgil, who represents reason. We understand the functions of the pagan sage when he penetrates into the depths of hell or climbs the heights of purgatory. when he stops at the entrance to the celestial regions, when the secrets of the material world or of the moral life seem familiar to him, or when he recognizes and proposes problems of a higher order, and, although ordinarily declining their solution, sometimes cannot help allowing the solution to be divined. We know why the Christian damosel affords a secret and constant assistance, until she, at length, appears in all her glory on the confines between heaven and earth; and why, while ever rising in the regions of space, and drawing nearer and nearer to the Divinity, she does not disdain to suspend her contemplations and to solve the questions propounded by him who had preceded her. Finally, we clearly conceive the marvellous association of Virgil and Beatrice to conduct the poet, that is to say, man, to peace, freedom, to that spiritual health which is the germ of eternal life.[1]

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[1] Inferno, ii., 17; Purgatorio, i., 18; vii., 8; xxi., 11; xxiii., 43; xxvii., 46; xxx., 17. Paradiso, ii., 21; xxxi., 29.

III.

While we thus recognize the external relations of philosophy, its internal constitution may be determined. We have already seen that it comprises physics, metaphysics, and ethics; in fact, the teachings of the two allegorical personages embrace man, nature, and the beings that are beyond both of these. In this enumeration, logic is apparently left on one side. It would almost seem as if the bold poet disdained it (plainly not in its proper use, but in certain everweening pretensions made for it. Tr.); he rises up against sundry of the questions with which the School loved to play: "What is the number of the motors of the heavens? if the *necessary* and the *contingent* are given in the major and the minor, can the *necessary* be found in the conclusion? if we must admit the existence of a *primum mobile*? if in a semicircle any triangle other than a right-angled triangle can be inscribed?" [1] He estimates freely the value of the formulas of reasoning in which the majority of his contemporaries placed unlimited confidence; he distinguishes the concatenation of truths from that of the terms which are their signs; and, if the true is found in the conclusion of the syllogism, he says it is there found because it was already present under the words of the premises. He leaves the art of reasoning, comprised under the name of dialectics, in the second degree of the *trivium;* and, following the system of analogies previously indicated, he compares it to the second planet, Mercury: as Mercury is the smallest of the stars, and the one most completely veiled by the brightness of the sun, so dialectics is of all the sciences, that which is reduced to the narrowest proportions, and can the most easily be hidden under the specious veil of sophistry.[1] Finally, he endows the evil spirits with a knowledge of this science, and makes a demon boast of being a logician.[2] However, the wise precepts which must temper the labors of thought, are not neglected by him; he connects them with the study of the intellectual phenomena whence they are derived, thus with the whole of psychology, under the denomination of ethics or moral philosophy. In fact, the practical point of view is that to which all his tendencies lead him. Moral philosophy is, in his eyes, the lawgiver of the human mind, the regulatrix of its economy; she prepares the place, and arranges for the admittance of the other sciences, which could not exist without her; in the same way that legal justice, the ruler of cities, protects in them the cultivation of the useful arts.[3] And, as it is in ethics that the excellence of philosophy is shown, it is, also, from ethics that the beauty of philosophy results; for beauty is harmony, and the most complete harmony found here below is that of the virtues. From the pleasure experienced in knowing them, results the desire of practicing them; and this desire restrains the passions, breaks up vicious habits, and gives rise to interior happiness, which always accompanies the legitimate exercise of the activity of the soul.[1] Hence the humble and courageous dispositions of the real sage; hence the docility and simplicity that he will ask from his disciple, the abhorrence of every stain, and the struggle with self-indulgence of which he will expose the secret corruption.[2] Hence, moral truths are considered as the noblest inheritance bequeathed to the world by those who, through the exercise of reasoning have descended to the depths of things.[3] Hence also the maxim that certain ideas are not to be reached by genius until it has passed through the flames of love.[4]

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[1] Paradiso, xiii., 33.

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[1] Convito, ii., 14.—Cf. St. Bernard, *Serm.* ii., *in Pentecost.*

[2] Inferno, xxvii., 41. L.

. . . . "Peradventure
Thou didst not think that I was a logician!"

[3] Convito, ii., 15.

IV.

Such ideas regarding the starting point and the end of philosophy must have had their influence on the choice of a method. If, in the legislation of the intelligence, the initiative belongs to God; if He acts through grace, and His first work in us is faith; it is not in an artificial, systematic doubt that reason will find the condition of its progress. All truths have been implicitly given to it by the way of superior instruction; it has only to disengage them from confusion, error, and uncertainty; it has not to seek, it has to verify and to state; it does not propose to itself problems to be solved, but theorems to be demonstrated; its conclusions are reminiscences: it proceeds by synthesis. On the other hand, if the genius of the poet disregards the attractions of a merely technical logic, if he passes without effort from the study of the supernatural world to that of nature, and from the study of nature to that of humanity, it is because these divers orders of ideas appear to him correlative. Man, in particular, is truly for him a microcosm, a summary of the creation, and an image of the Creator; each moment of his life is the result of his past days and the foreshadowing of his future existence. Thenceforth, all science seems only a series of bold equations and rapid deductions; all is explained by way of juxtaposition, of comparison; beings are considered in their living and concrete reality, and abstraction shows itself only at long intervals. Now, since practical utility is the end of all his investigations; since there is haste, impatience, to enter into action; since study itself is presented as a moral obligation, and science as a duty, we cannot be surprised if all the knowledge attained come to be classed under the notion of good and evil. There will be a body of doctrines which will comprise, first, evil alone; then evil struggling with, or in relation to, good; and finally, good itself, in man, in society, in the life to come, in the exterior beings to whose influences human nature is subjected. The invisible world will be taken for the main field of these explorations, since there only do the problems of the visible world find their ultimate solution; there are contemplated face to face the substances and the causes admitted here below on the faith of their phenomena and their effects. Thus the learned conceptions of the reason will enter spontaneously into the poetic frame afforded by religious tradition: Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise.[1]

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[1] Convito, iii., 15.

[2] Inferno, ii., 15. Purgatorio, i., 32; ii., 10; xix., 10.

[3] Purgatorio, xviii., 23.

[4] Paradiso, vii., 20.—Cf. St. Bernard, *Sermo de Deo diligendo.*

Such a method might seem at first sight to present the appearance of a paralogism: for, if it makes of intellectual labor a precept, whence can result the proof of such a precept, if not from the labor itself? It rises, and again descends through the series of beings; it concludes from time to eternity, as from the depths of eternity it perceives the things of time. It accepts *a priori* the dogma of the future life, it makes it the pivotal point of this entire study whence it would seem as if it ought to be deduced *a posteriori.* There is then a circle at the foundation of Dante's thought; but it is not a vicious circle; there is a similar circle at the base of every origin: at that of certitude in logic, at that of moral duty, of powers and rights in matters political, of the word in literature; because, at every origin we encounter Him who is the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega, the circle of which the centre is everywhere, and the circumference nowhere.

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[1] Gravina, *Ragion poetica*, lib. ii. 1, 13.

CHAPTER II.

EVIL.

At the moment of entrance into the realm of evil, the soul is filled with dread; it hesitates in the presence of its own weakness. It comprehends all that there is of sorrowful or of terrible in thus being initiated into the mysteries of human depravity, and that this experience is at once a privilege and a trial, reserved to those marked out for the fulfilment of some lofty and uncommon destiny.[1] It would even stop in the way, were it not for two reflections which lend it aid, the first causing it to realize the impossibility of issuing from its own aberrations except by this means, and the second, to remember the divine assistance assured to the execution of a divinely inspired undertaking.[2] It is for those who, already dead to truth and justice, enter upon the knowledge of evil, and descend into its abysses, impelled by a culpable avidity; it is for such alone that the writing stands inscribed in sombre characters upon the gate: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."[1]

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[1] Inferno, ii. 4.

[2] Inferno, i. 38; Purgatorio, i. 21; xxx. 46.—Cf. Virgil: *Æneid*, vi. 130.

Evil is not simply the absence of good, it is the *deprivation* of good. Good is perfection. Absolute perfection is *being*, carried to its highest power—that is, God. God calls His creatures to draw near to Him according to the divers proportions of power, according even to the diversity of the powers, with which He has endowed them: this is the measure of their relative perfection. Their resistance to this divine call, their turning away from their proper tendency, is that which constitutes their perversity. This fact, easily recognizable in the individual man, is exhibited on a larger scale in the history of nations or societies, increases in its proportions when it is reproduced outside of the conditions of terrestrial life, and reaches its acme in beings more than human.

I.

EVIL IN INDIVIDUAL MAN IN THIS WORLD.

1. As truth is the supreme good of the intellect,[2] ignorance and error constitute intellectual evil. Ignorance and error vary according to their causes; of such causes, some are within man, and others are external to him. The first class is divided into four categories. There are first, bodily defects of which we must dis-

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[1] Inferno, iii. 3.

[2] Inferno, iii. 6.

tinguish two kinds: disorders of the organism derived from the mysterious sources of generation, and deteriorations of the brain occasioned by accidental causes. From these proceed dumbness and deafness, phrensy and alienation of mind.[1] Then come the native and universal infirmities of the soul: weakness of the senses, feebleness of the reason. If the testimony of the eye or of the ear, on sensible qualities which pertain to their sphere, rarely deceives, the multiple sensations which are awakened by a single object, and which must be embraced together, are not always rightly combined.[2] Besides, the sphere of the senses is restricted, and if reason shuts herself up within the limits of that sphere, she makes to herself very short wings. Even when she is able to take her whole flight, she reaches boundaries which she is forbidden to overpass: at the end of her laborious route, she sees opening before her the infinite way of the mysteries, which rise higher and higher, until they reach the very topmost heights of heaven.[3] There are other species of infirmity,

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[1] Convito, i. 1; iv. 15.

[2] Convito, iv. 8; Purgatorio, xxix. 16. The common object which the sense deceives. Cf. Aristot. *De Anima*, ii. 6.

[3] Paradiso, ii. 19. L. Purgatorio, xxxiii. 30. L.

> * * * * For as much as following the senses,
> Thou seest that the reason has short wings:
> * * * * Behold your path from the divine

less general, but more serious, because they are voluntary; vain-glory, pusillanimity, and levity. Vain-glory makes many rely upon their own strength until they go so far as to take their individual conceptions for the measure of all things; they disdain to learn. to listen, to ask questions; they dream without sleeping, and go along philosophizing by rash ways which each one makes according to his own will, isolating himself that he may be the more conspicuous.[1] Pusillanimity causes many to fancy science to be above the reach of man; incapable of seeking it for themselves, careless of the researches of others, obstinate in their inertia, like certain timid animals, they remain in the blindness of a gross way of life because they have despaired of truth.[2] Levity carries away the too lively minds who always go beyond the bounds of logic, who conclude before they have reasoned, fly from one conclusion to another, deny or affirm without distinguishing, and

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Distant as far as separated is
From earth the heaven that highest hastens on.

[1] Convito, iv. 15.—Cf. Hugh of St Victor, *Eruditionis didascalicae*, lib. v. 9. Paradiso, xxix. 27. L.

So that below, not sleeping, people dream * * *
Below you do not journey by one path
Philosophizing; so transporteth you
Love of appearance and the thought thereof.

Cf. St. Thomas, *Contra Gent.*, i. 5.

[2] Convito, iv. 15. Inferno, ii. 15.

fancy thay are subtile because they are superficial.[1] Finally, if we choose to penetrate to the innermost recesses of human corruption, we meet with the vices of the heart, the foes of all good thoughts; we perceive shameful pleasures fascinate the soul to the point of making it hold for naught everything except themselves: the intelligence is seen a captive held in chains by the sensibilities in revolt.[2]

The second class, comprising such impediments as are external to man, may also be divided into two distinct categories. First to be noted are the necessities of domestic and civil life, the difficulties of times and places, the absence of means for study, of advice and good examples, the influence of common opinions.[3] But beyond these circumstances, material so to speak, and easily recognized, which prevent our attaining to truth, other foes are hidden, perfidious and unreachable; spirits jealous of a science which they have lost, desirous of making others share in the darkness which has become their appanage. The action of such external and malevolent powers alone explains those involuntary, unavoidable facts, which exercise so baleful an influence, and which we call temptations. Temptation, in the logical order, takes on two forms. It calls up in the way of our researches phantoms which seem to block our progress, fears, unreasonable melancholy, a painful discouragement, which, driving us back from our onward course, would make us re-enter into the shameful night of ignorance. Or, if it cannot destroy in us the desire of knowing, it seeks to lead it astray by lying appearances, it lures us in a direction the term of which is error.[1]

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[1] Convito, iv. 15. Paradiso, xiii. 39. L.

For very low among the fools is he
Who affirms without distinction, or denies.

[2] Convito, i. 1.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium theologiae.* iii. 5. St. Thomas, prima secundæ, q. 85, art. 3.

[3] Convito, i. 1; iv. 8. Paradiso, xiii. 40. L.

* * * * It happens that full often bends
Current opinion in a false direction.

Now the end of these divers maladies of the understanding is death, for life is that mode of being proper to living creatures; vegetative in plants, sensitive in animals, in man essentially rational. And as things borrow their names from that which is essential to their being, to live, for man, is to reason; and to depart from the legitimate use of his reason is to die. If any one should say: How can we call him dead whom we yet see acting? the reply must be, that he is dead, as a man, but the animal still remains alive.[1]

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[1] Inferno, viii. 28; xxiii. 47. In canto ix. (terz. 18), the Furies threaten Dante with the appearance of Medusa; and he himself alludes to the allegorical interpretation which he attaches to this myth (terz. 21). Giacopo di Dante, in his unpublished commentary, completes his father's thought by explaining the three Gorgons to signify three sorts of fear, of which the last and most terrible, represented by Medusa, petrifies in some way the faculties of the soul, and sometimes strikes them with an eternal immobility. This passage offers an undeniable reminiscence of the Odyssey, lib. xi. line 633.

2. The perfection of the will consists in virtue. Moral evil then is vice: vice is any disposition of our will contrary to the divine will.

There are three dispositions which Heaven does not allow: incontinence, malice, and bestiality.[2] Under the name of incontinence are included lust and gluttony, which subject the reason to the appetites of the flesh: avarice and prodigality, both the result of an unregulated use of temporal goods: anger and that culpable melancholy which enervates the soul and keeps it in a state of slothful inaction. Malice is more odious; the end which it proposes to itself is injustice, the means it employs are violence and fraud. We may exercise violence towards three sorts of persons, God, ourselves, and our neighbor; and in two ways, according as we attack them in their existence or in the things which belong to them.[1] The violence which attacks one's neighbor may hence be murder or robbery; that which one turns against oneself has its outcome in suicide or in dissipation; and that which is aimed at the Divinity is exhibited either by blasphemy, which is a moral deicide, by lubricious actions outraging nature, or by usury, which implies contempt for industry, the child of nature, as nature is the child of God.[2]

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[1] Convito, iv. 7.—*Ibid.* ii. 8.

[2] Inferno, xi. 27. L.

Hast thou no recollection of those words
With which thine Ethics thoroughly discusses
The dispositions three that Heaven abides not,—
Incontinence, and Malice, and insane
Bestiality? * * * *

Cf. Aristot. Ethics, Book vii. Chap. i.

Fraud, which is still more criminal, can be employed against those with whom one is united only by the general bond of humanity, or against those whose confidence is due to the closer bonds of relationship, nationality, benefaction, or legal subordination: in the latter condition, fraud, having reached its most odious degree, is called treachery or treason. We have seen man, by abdicating his reason, descend to the level of the brutes. Now is not a renunciation of empire over oneself, and the consequent succumbing to the slavery of the passions, equivalent to such an abdication? As then, beyond the ordinary limitations of human nature, there is a lofty point where virtue becomes heroism, so is there also a point of degradation at which vice becomes brutishness. Such is the meaning of the fable of Circe, so celebrated in antique poetry. But the enchantress, although no longer visible, has not ceased to exist, or at least, her magical transformations have not ceased to be accomplished under other aspects. Beneath exteriors which would seem to hold a thinking soul, are developed the low and groveling instincts of brute nature; we need not penetrate very far into the manners and customs of the various peoples to recognize these hideous types—the filthy habits of the hog, the snappish humor of the dog, the cunning of the fox.[1] If we go back from the effects of vice to its causes, we meet with another and perhaps more scientific division. Love, the necessary principle of all activity, can err as to its object by straying toward evil; it can also err in the excess or in the insufficiency of its energy, even while continuing to be directed towards good. Now, as love cannot cease to tend toward the welfare of the being in which it dwells, no one can hate himself; and as we can conceive of no being entirely detached from the eternal essence whence everything emanates, a feeling of hatred toward God is also happily an impossibility. There remains then no other evil to be loved except evil to our neighbor, and this corrupt love may be fashioned in the clay of the heart in three different ways. At one time it is the hope of his own elevation which makes a man desire the abasement of a neighbor; again, it is the fear of losing power, honor, or renown, which makes him grieve over the success of another; or still again, it is a wound left in his soul by some unmerited offence. Pride, envy, anger; these are the three modes of the love of evil. Love feels confusedly the existence of some real good, in which it would find rest; it seeks to attain it; if the effort be insufficient, sloth is the proper name of the resultant disposition. Finally, there are other apparent goods which do not yield true happiness: riches, sensual delights, pleasures that bring a blush to the countenance: the love which gives itself up, without reserve, to these enjoyments, becomes criminal, and we know it as avarice, gluttony, and lust. Now, as these seven capital sins descend from one and the same origin, so in like manner are the crowd of lesser vices related to them by a direful genealogy.[1]

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[1] Inferno, xi. 8. L.

Of every malice that wins hate in Heaven,
    Injury is the end; and all such end
    Either by force or fraud afflicteth others. * * *
To God, to ourselves, and to our neighbor can we
    Use force; I say on them and on their things.

Cf. Cicero, *de Officiis*, i. 12.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, iii. 6.

[2] Inferno, xi. 33. L.

Philosophy, he said, to him who heeds it,
    Noteth, not only in one place alone,
    After what manner nature takes her course
From intellect Divine, and from its art; etc.

Cf. Aristot. Physics, 1.

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[1] Purgatorio, xiv. 14. L.

On which account have so transformed their nature
The dwellers in that miserable valley,
It seems that Circe had them in her pasture.

Cf. Cicero, *de Officiis*, i. 12.—Especially Bœthius, *de Consolatione*, lib. iv. pros. 3.—Richard of St. Victor, *de Eruditione interioris hominis*, lib. iii. cap. ii.

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[1] Purgatorio, xvii. 32; Cary's Tr.

> "Creator, nor created being, e'er,
> My son," he thus began, "was without love,
> Or natural, or the free-spirit's growth.
> Thou hast not that to learn. The natural still
> Is without error: but the other swerves,
> If on ill object bent, or through excess
> Of vigor, or defect." * * * *
> "The evil must be another's, which is loved."
> "Three ways such love is gendered in your clay."
> "All indistinctly apprehend a bliss
> On which the soul may rest;" * * *
> If ye behold
> Or seek it with a love remiss and lax,
> This cornice, after just repenting, lays
> Its penal torment on ye. Other good
> There is, where man finds not his happiness:"
> "The love too lavishly bestowed on this,
> Along three circles over us, is mourned."

This classification of the capital sins, different from the one generally received, and also from that of St. Thomas, prima secundæ, q. 84, a. 7, is found in St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, iii. 14.—Hugh of St. Victor, *Allegoriæ in Matthæum*, 3, 4, 5.—St. Gregory, *Moralium*, xxxi. 31; and with some slight differences, Cassian, *de Institut. cœnob.*, lib. v. cap. i.

But, although nothing is more free than love, its first movement does not depend upon itself. This movement, when it is evil, is called concupiscence, and of this we may distinguish three kinds: the concupiscence of the senses, which is luxury; the concupiscence of the mind, which is ambition; and the last species, cupidity, which has something of the other two, in so much as it has for its object the means of satisfying them. These are the three menacing monsters which a man meets as he goes deep into the forest of life. Voluptuousness, under the semblance of a flexile and wanton panther, never ceasing to fascinate the gaze that she has once captivated; ambition, comparable to the proud lion; and cupidity, like a wolf, whose leanness betrays its insatiable desires; this last counts the largest number of victims. But these formidable beasts did not originate in the world which we find them ravaging; they are the children of hell, and envy opened for them the nether gates;[1] or rather, to speak more exactly, concupiscence is another of those facts, impersonal, universal, and continual, whose presence bespeaks the influence of some external power. This power is unequally exercised, at first as a simple inspiration, against which resistance is easy; then as an over-ruling possession, when the will has been surrendered to it. And when the will has permitted itself to be led to the lowest abysses of vice, it seems in some sort to perish therein; the moral life expires before the physical life has reached its final hour; we may say that the soul is already buried in the infernal prison to which it has condemned itself. The body in which it dwells is thenceforth as if possessed by another spirit, another life, another will, each and all Satanic. This is not simply death, it is an anticipated damnation; in the place of the man who has departed, it is no longer a brute that remains, it is a demon.[1]

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[1] Inferno, i., 11, 15, 17, 32, 37. L.

And a she-wolf, that with all hungerings
Seemed to be laden in her meagreness,
And many folk has caused to live forlorn.
* * * * Back to Hell,
There from whence envy first did let her loose.

See also Purgatorio, xx., 4.

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[1] Purgatorio, xiv., 49. L.

* * * * * * The hook
Of the old adversary draws you to him.

Inferno, xxvii., 39. xxxiii., 43. L.

* * * * As soon as any soul betrays
As I have done, his body by a demon
Is taken from him, who thereafter rules it,
Until his time has wholly been revolved.

Cf. St. Thomas, p. sect., q. 114, a. 1.—St. Bonaventura, *Serm.*, *in feriami v.*, *Pentecostes.*

II.

EVIL IN SOCIETY.

The multiplication of the individual in space, forms society, and the evolution of society in time, is the subject of history. The same facts which have just been studied in the heart of the human personage, ought then to be found on the stage of history, but with vastly enlarged proportions. The evil of the intelligence and that of the will, error and vice, are there again brought forth, the one in philosophical and religious teachings, and the other in the temporal and spiritual government of the nations.

1. The aberrations of the human race begin in its very cradle, in the confusion introduced within his own being by the sin of our first father. Deprived of the happiness of conversing here below, face to face, with his creator, man sought to find the divinity in the stars of the firmament, of which he admired the brightness and felt the influence. This is why the names of Jupiter and Mercury, Mars and Venus, were hailed with vows and sacrifices. This was a potent factor in the rise of idolatry, the first error of the first peoples.[1] In time, the need of the truth not

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[1] Paradiso, iv., 21; viii., 1. L.

The world used in its peril to believe
  That the fair Cypria delirious love
  Rayed out in the third epicycle turning;
Wherefore not only unto her paid honor
  Of sacrifices and of votive cry
  The ancient nations in the ancient error,
But both Dione honored they and Cupid.

possessed seized upon sundry noble intelligences. After the seven illustrious Greeks who received the title of *Wise Men*, another sage arose, Pythagoras, who, more deeply penetrated by the feeling of human infirmity, desired to be known as a *Friend to Wisdom.* Schools are formed, and philosophy is born. [1] These efforts do not remain without result, but they are powerless in regard to the very questions the response to which is of the uttermost importance. The sovereign reason will not fully reveal itself until the coming of the Son of Mary. [2] God, misknown by the majority, does not receive from those who have some proper knowledge of Him, the homage which is His due. [3] While this general dimness envelopes all the schools, several are surrounded by obscurities peculiar to themselves. It would require a long time to enumerate all their aberrations: from Parmenides and the presumptuous Eleatics, who plunge into the depths of reasoning without knowing whither they are going, down to Epicurus and his followers, who make the spirit perish with the body;[1] from Pythagoras, who makes souls descend through all the grades of creation, to Plato, who sees them remount to the stars whence they emanated.[2] The modern world is not willing to leave to the antique world the sad privilege of believing and teaching falsehood: false doctrines find theological expression in heresy, and philosophical expression in numerous systems. Great citizens of the Christian republics, sovereigns of the Holy Empire, and even cardinals who serve them as counsellors, have professed impious doctrines.[3] The multitude, ignorant and sordid as it is, deserting the arts known as liberal, because service to such arts must be disinterested, hastens to the lessons of the decretalists, or follows in the train of physicians who point the way to fortune.[4]

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[1] Convito, iii., 11.

[2] Purgatorio, iii., 13. L.

> Mortals, remain contented at the *Quia*;
> For if ye had been able to see all,
> No need there were for Mary to give birth;
> And ye have seen desiring without fruit,
> Those whose desire would have been quieted,
> Which evermore is given them for a grief.
> I speak of Aristotle and of Plato,
> And many others. * * * *

[3] Inferno, iv., 13, 43; Purgatorio, viii., 9.

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[1] Inferno, x., 5.

With Epicurus all his followers,
Who with the body mortal make the soul,

Ibid, xii., 14; Paradiso, xiii., 42.

Parmendes, Melissus, Brissus are,
And many who went on and knew not whither.

[2] Convito, iv., 21; Paradiso, iv., 8.

Again for doubting furnish thee occasion
Souls seeming to return unto the stars
According to the sentiment of Plato.

[3] Inferno, x., 11, 40.

[4] Convito, iii., 11; Paradiso, ix., 1, 5; xi., 2; xii., 28.

The Scriptures and the Fathers remain buried in the dust. Fables and rash speculations find their way even into the pulpit, and ask as their reward the stupid wonderment or sacrilegious laughter of an audience worthy of them.[1]

2. But, afflicting as the errors touching the rationality of the public may be to the poet-philosopher, he at least finds a sort of consolation in being able to point out the fragility of our fallen nature as their cause: he reserves his chief mourning, and all his anger, to deplore the corruption of morals, of which he recognizes the origin in the corruption of the laws and of the powers behind the laws. He sees the shepherds of the people lead their flocks to gross pastures where they forget the justice for which they had hungered.[2] He enumerates the small number of good kings, the tumults in cities ruled by the people, the intestine strife, and the blood poured forth.[3] And, as if his words were defied and vanquished by these direful spectacles, he borrows the language used by the prophets of the Old and New Testaments. The government of the nations, considered in its successive changes, may be compared to the vision of Daniel. It is figured by the gigantic statue of an old man, with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, a trunk of copper, legs of iron, and feet of clay. Standing in a hollow of Mt. Ida, he turns his back on Egypt, and looks toward

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[1] Paradiso, xxix., 28.

[2] Purgatorio, xvi., 34.

[3] Inferno, xii., 36.

Rome. Each one of the parts of which he is composed, except his head, is furrowed by a gash, whence tears distil; these streams of tears, uniting, find a passageway down from the cavern, and give rise in the interior of the earth to the four rivers of the infernal regions. The statue is monarchy, such as bad princes have made it. Egypt is the figure of the institutions of the past; Rome is the type of later times. The succession of the metals represents that of empires, of political forms, of the ages which have become more and more degenerate. The wounds of the social body are truly the sources of the flood of crimes and woes of which the overflow is to aid in filling hell. [1]

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[1] Inferno, xiv., 31.

In the mid-sea there sits a wasted land . . .
A grand old man stands in the mount erect,
  Who holds his shoulders turned tow'rds Damietta,
  And looks at Rome as if it were his mirror.
His head is fashioned of refined gold, etc.

The interpretation here given of this allegory is that proposed by Costa in his commentary on the Divine Comedy. We have thought proper to admit it, since we find the dream of Nabuchodonosor explained in an almost identical manner by Richard of St. Victor, *de Erudit. int. hom.* l. i., cap. 1. Our last remaining doubts were dispelled when we read in the manuscript commentary ascribed to Giacopo di Dante, the following gloss: "It is to be considered that this old man signifies and represents the entire empire and course of the world, the whole empire with the lives of the rulers

The religious decadence is presented under a no less sinister aspect. The Roman court has become like to the woman seen by the prophetic Evangelist, seated by the waters, and dallying with kings. Formerly, the Pontiff, her lawful spouse, faithful to the laws of virtue, was able to control the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, that is, sin, which in our day is no longer restrained.[1] Gold and silver are made into idols which do not lack priests. The apostolic keys have been changed into armorial bearings: they have been seen on the standards of men fighting against true believers. War is carried on in our day by depriving Christian peoples of the spiritual bread which our Heavenly Father has prepared for all.[2] However, let those who are afflicted by these scandals await the providential hour which is to end them.

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and princes from the beginning of the reign of Saturn down to our own times. . . The author purposes showing how the empire being among pagans and in the Orient, was transported among the Greeks. . . then was the empire transported from among the Greeks to the Romans; and therefore does the author say that this old man has his back turned toward Damietta, which is in the East, and looks at Rome, that is, toward the West."

[1] Inferno, xix., 36.

> The Evangelist you pastors had in mind, etc.

It is again from the commentator Costa that we borrow the explanation of this difficult passage.—Cf. Richard of St. Victor, *sup. Apocalyps.*

[2] Inferno, xix., 38; Paradiso, ix , 44; xviii., 41; xxvii., 16.

Schism rends asunder, and does not cure; and they prepare for themselves eternal remorse who profit by the dark nights of the Church to sow tares in her field.[1] But the depravation of the two powers, ecclesiastical and temporal, is less perillous than their confusion. The cross and the sword have been united in the hands of the violent; mutual respect bas been lost in a forced conjunction.[2] If order is the highest good of society, confusion, disorder, is for it the lowest expression of evil.

III.

EVIL IN LOST SOULS IN THE OTHER WORLD.

Thus far, evil has revealed itself only in a manner doubly imperfect, limited in man by liberty, which never entirely perishes, and in society by the protestations, always to be heard, of the public conscience. Now we must behold it freed from the obstacles opposed to it by the possible return to, and the simultaneous presence of, good; we must see it in a condition of isolation, of immutability. The city of the wicked, invisible in this world where it is confounded with the city of God, is to become visible in the world of the dead.

1. Popular tradition, inspired perhaps by volcanic phenomena,

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[1] Inferno, xxviii., 12. See for explanations more complete, and corrective of the bitterness of the preceding reproaches, Part III., Chap. V.

[2] Purgatorio, xvi., 37.

placed hell in the interior of the terrestrial globe. The science of antiquity represented that situation as the lowest in the universe, and the farthest removed from the Empyrean: it was natural to banish to such a place the souls cut off by sin from the abode of the Divinity.[1] Hell still retains some marks of the divine omnipresence. Power, Wisdom, and Love prepared it from of old; even Love, for it is just that eternal sorrow should be the lot of those who have despised eternal love![2]

If hell is the accomplishing of the work of reprobation, the outline of which has already been traced upon the earth, the principal features ought to be the same, and the same divisions be suitable to both. The condemned in the other world will then range themselves in the same categories as do sinners in this. The abyss is hollowed out by nine circles, which become narrower as they lie deeper. The first receives within its wide circumference men who were never really living, souls that passed away without infamy, and without glory, neutral between God and His enemies, ever acting solely for themselves. Beneath these appears the throng who, outside of Christianity, led good lives, but were lacking either in knowledge of the truth or in courage to serve it. The absence of an infinite bliss which they constantly desire without the hope of attaining, throws a veil of sadness over their destiny, which, in other respects, is neither without consolation nor without honor. The four circles that follow contain the victims of incontinence; on the confines between incontinence and malice, is chastised heresy, which partakes of both. The seventh circle, subdivided into three zones, contains the violent. The eighth is furrowed by ten wide ditches wherein fraud is punished. In the ninth, groan the traitors.[1]

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[1] Inferno, *passim.* This opinion was also that of the Middle Ages.—Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Erudit. didascal.*, 1, 3.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium Theologiæ*, viii., 21.

[2] Inferno, iii., 2; Cary's Tr.

> Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
> To rear me was the task of power divine,
> Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.

Ibid., 42, Paradiso, xv., 4.

> He hath in sooth good cause for endless grief
> Who, for the love of thing that lasteth not,
> Despoils himself forever of that love.

2. It is within these bounds that is to be set forth the solemn exhibition of suffering, physical, intellectual, and moral. Suffering, the progeny of sin, keeps its primitive character, and remains an evil when it is not expiatory. But physical suffering supposes the existence of the senses, which seem inconceivable if separated from their organs. Hence, until the general resurrection shall have restored to the reprobate the flesh in which

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[1] Inferno, *passim*; but especially xi., 6.

they grew corrupt, provisional bodies are given to them: shadows, when compared with the living members they have replaced, and yet visible realities; not displacing the foreign objects that they encounter, yet hiding from sight those before which they are interposed; *vanities* in themselves, but capable of feeling torture. They sometimes lose the human form, to assume more sinister shapes; they crawl as serpents, throw out branches from beneath a delusive covering of bark, or flicker in whirling eddies of flame.[1] Thus, all that nature holds of most terrible, the most frightful horrors that the human imagination has been able to invent, all that divine retribution has reserved to itself in the way of unutterable severities, are conjoined in chastisements, each one of which, a hellish symbol, represents the vice to which it corresponds.

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[1] Inferno, vi., 6, 12; xvii., 29, 33; xii., 27; xix., 15, 43; xxiii., 13; xxiv., 8; xxxii., 27, etc.

He rends the spirits, flays, and quarters them. . .
* * * We placed our feet
Upon their vanity that person seems. . .
Within his arms encircled and sustained me.
* * * Walking 'mong the heads
I struck my foot hard in the face of one. . .
He said to his companions: are you ware
That he behind moveth whate'er he touches?
Thus are not wont to do the feet of dead men.

St. Augustine (*de Civit Dei* xxi., 10) seems to express a doubt on the point of knowing whether the damned have bodies.

These sufferings will again increase when the opened graves shall have restored the dead to a life that will have no end. For, the more complete a being is, the more completely are its functions fulfilled: the closer the union of the soul with the body, the more intense must be the resulting sensibility.[1] And now, how shall the punishment of intelligences be set forth? Memory of the past remains; but the memory of crime, without repentance, is only an additional woe.[2] The present is not known to them, although the future is open to their view--like to the case of some aged persons whose enfeebled vision can perceive objects a great way off, but fails to distinguish them as they come nearer. But this prophetic illumination, the only ray from the eternal light which falls upon them, will be eclipsed, when, time having come to an end, the gates of the future shall be closed. Then, in them, all knowledge will be extinct.[3] Even the ideas which, for the time being, still subsist, are dim and confused, are not in the state of science, much less in that of philosophy; for philosophy is compounded of knowledge and of love, and in that place, all love dies. The infernal spirits are then deprived of the contemplation of that beautiful object which is the beatitude of the understanding, and the deprivation of which is full of bitterness and sorrow.[1]

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[1] Inferno, vi., 40.

* * * Return unto thy science,
Which wills, that as a thing more perfect is,
The more it feels of pleasure and of pain.

This maxim is borrowed from St. Augustine, who got it from Aristotle.

[2] Inferno, x, 16, 26, etc.--Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.* p. 1. q. 89, art 6.

[3] Inferno, vi., 22; xv., 21; xxviii., 26; x., 33.

The absence of love is the uttermost punishment of wicked wills. Thence the mutual hatred which makes them curse one another,[2] that hatred of themselves which spurs them on to throw themselves in the way of torments,[3] and the hatred of the Divin-

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It seems that you can see, if I hear rightly,
  Beforehand whatsoe'er time brings with it,
  And in the present have another mode.
We see, like those who have imperfect sight,
  The things, he said, that distant are from us;
  So much still shines on us the Sovereign Ruler.

Cf. St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*, art. 8.

[1] Convito, iii., 13. The intelligences exiled from their supernal country cannot philosophize; because love is dead in them, and to philosophize, love is necessary; whence we see that they are deprived of the presence of this most beautiful one; since she is the beatitude of the intellect, to be deprived of her is most bitter and filled with every misery.

[2] Inferno, *passim.*

[3] Inferno, iii., 40.

ity whom they are braving in the very midst of their punishments.[1] Thence, the ceaseless blasphemy against the Creator, against the human race, against the time, the place, the authors of their birth, and that desire for annihilation which will never be granted. Their passions of this world have accompanied them: greedy as of yore for praise, pleasure, and vengeance, they never cease to merit the chastisements which they never cease to suffer,[2] and these sufferings which by their endless duration are akin to infinity, are also related to it by their intensity, since they all proceed from the loss of the sovereign good, which is God.

IV.

The Demons.

We have recognized in the errors and transgressions of life the origin of the chastisements which follow death. Evil has shown itself as in turn cause and effect, under its voluntary, and under its penal form. Outside of this alternation of death and life, there are beings in whom are more closely united the cause and the effect, the evil disposition and its punishment, beings who influence guilty humanity, who preceded it in guilt; instigators to the sins of men in this world, and executors of his punishment in the next, finished types of perversity: such are the demons.

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[1] Inferno, xiv., 18; xxv., 1.

[2] Inferno, v., 26; xxxi., 26.—Cf. St. Thomas, 2^a, 2^{ae}, q. 15. art. 3. *Summa contra gentes*, xv., 92–95.

It would seem as if in falling from the heights of the spiritual world, where they stood in the first rank, these fallen angels have undergone the humiliation of a material transformation, and that bodies have likewise been given to them. At the same time, an almost sovereign empire over nature is attributed to them.[1] Storms obey them, the waters and the lightnings gather at their beck;[2] they sometimes wreak their vengeance on the bodies of the dead, when the souls have escaped their power. With this supernatural intervention is connected the iniquitous pursuit of magic. But they exercise a still more constant and general influence over human destinies: temptation is their work. We have seen them lay snares along the perilous paths of science; we have seen them open the gates of hell to the three species of concupiscence. Like to fishers who never weary, they hide under deceitful baits the hooks which catch wavering wills. They pursue their prey even beyond the tomb: they do not fear to dispute with the angels for its possession, and thus renew their combats of the olden time.[3]

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[1] Inferno, *passim*. Especially xii., xvii., xxxi.—Cf. St. Augustine, *de Civitate Dei*, ix., cap. xxiii.; and *Sup. Genesim*.

[2] Purgatorio, v., 37.—Cf. St. Thomas, p. q. 110, art. 3.

[3] Inferno, xxvii., 38; Purgatorio, v., 36.

Their second office is the administration of punishments. They reign over lost souls in the infernal regions, each division of which is placed under the auspices of certain ones among their number. Thus, in the vestibule, amid the throng of egotists, are found the ungrateful angels who remained neutral during the revolt in the heavens.[1] Thus also, by a reminiscence of pagan poetry which theology did not condemn, Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Pluto, Phlegias, the Furies, the Centaurs, the Harpies, Geryon, Cacus, the Giants, all transformed into demons, are established as guardians of the successive zones.[2] Innumerable legions are scattered, either upon the ramparts of the dolorous city, or in its divers parts, and pursue their unhallowed sports amid the terrible spectacles therein presented.[3] But these legions are all slaves of one master. He was the first in rank, and once the most beautiful of spirits; now, he is the Evil Will, who seeks ill alone; he it is from whom all woes proceed, the ancient enemy of mankind.[4] A wretched and lying parody of Divinity, the ruler of the realm of pain, he has his icy throne at a point which is at once the centre and the bottom of the abyss: around him are graded the nine hierarchies of reprobation; on him rests the entire system of iniquity.[1] Sin and suffering, which are for souls

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[1] Inferno. iii., 13.

[2] Inferno, iii., v., vi., viii., ix., xii., xiii., xvii., xxv., xxxi., xxxiv.—Virgil *Æneid.*, vi.—Cf. St. Thomas 2a 2æ p. 94.

[3] Inferno, viii., 28; xxi.—Cf. St. Thomas, 1a p. 63, art. 9.

[4] Inferno, xxxiv., 6; Purgatorio, xiv., 49.

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[1] Inferno, xxxiv. L.

The emperor of the kingdom dolorous
  From his mid-breast forth issued from the ice;....
Oh, what a marvel it appeared to me,
  When I beheld three faces on his head!
  The one in front, and that vermilion was;....
And the right hand one seemed 'twixt white and yellow;
  The left was such to look upon as those
  Who come from where the Nile falls valley-ward.

In the bold portrait that Dante draws of Lucifer, we cannot help remarking the three faces attributed to him, recalling the triple Hecate of ancient mythology. A still deeper intention seems to underlie the idea of the three colors given to this triple face, and contrasted to the three colors of the mystic circles whereby later we shall find the Blessed Trinity represented. The commentary of Giacopo di Dante offers on this point a symbolic explanation which by reason of its originality seems worthy of notice: "These three faces signify the three impotences pertaining to Lucifer, whence all ills arise, and which are opposite to the three attributes possessed by God. The first attribute which God has is prudence, by which He foresees and co-ordinates all things: in contrast to this, Lucifer has ignorance, that is, he neither knows nor discerns anything; and this is signified by the black face. The second attribute that God has, is love, which made Him make the world, and rule and sustain it: in contrast to what weight is for bodies, have forced him to the spot which is the very centre of the earth, toward which all heavy masses tend. The general gravitation envelops him, weighs upon him, presses him down on every side: his crime was to wish to draw all creatures to himself: his punishment is, to be crushed under the weight of creation.[1]

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this, Lucifer has hatred and envy, by which he corrupts the world and promotes the doing of evil; this is signified by the red face. The third attribute of God is power, by which He rules all things, whether eternal or of this world, as is pleasing to Him, and as reason and justice require; in contrast to this, Lucifer has weakness and powerlessness, that is, he can do nothing,....and this is signified by the face 'twixt white and yellow."

[1] Inferno, xxxiv., etc.

And if I then became disquieted,
  Let stolid people think who do not see
  What the point is beyond which I had passed.

Paradiso, xxix., 18:

.. .That one, whom thou hast seen
By all the burden of the world constrained.

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *compendium*, ii., 23.—St. Thomas, 1a, q. 64, art. 4.

CHAPTER III.

EVIL AND GOOD, IN CONJUNCTION AND IN CONFLICT.

EVIL in all its deformity, and Good in all its purity, can display themselves thoroughly only at their origin and at their term, both these points being placed beyond the horizon of time. But Good and Evil meet in time as in a free field, and there encounter one another, now sharply opposed, and again confounded together. We must examine into the circumstances and the effects of this encounter, whether in the vicissitudes of life, individual or social, in that continuation of life wherein efficacious expiations may be accomplished, or in nature, which is the theatre in which occur all temporal incidents, and which always, in some sort, bears the impress of their passage.

I.

1. We here find the proper place to make known the innermost constitution of man, the common subject of these various influences (propitious or detrimental), the instrument alternately of Good or of Evil. We are not in this connection permitted

to recoil before any secret, whether of generation, of the union of the soul with the body, or of their separation.

Three powers concur in the work of generation. First, the stars exercise the potency of their radiation upon matter, disengaging, under favoring conditions, from the combined elements, the vital principles which animate plants and animals. Then, there is in man a power of assimilation which is communicated to the digested elements, which power is distributed with the blood to all the members of the body, and bears fecundity with it, even externally. Finally, woman holds within herself a constitutional power which prepares the matter destined to receive the benefit of birth. The thirsty veins do not, in the work of nutrition, absorb all the blood that is given to them. A portion of this alimentary fluid, purified, remains in the heart, and is there still more deeply impregnated with an assimilative energy; it passes off into channels wherein its elaboration is completed, then at the proper moment, the blood of the father, active and capable of organizing, fecundates the passive and docile blood contained in the womb of the mother. There are fashioned the elements of the future body, until a sufficient preparation has enabled them to lend themselves to the celestial influence which produces life in them. This life, at first vegetable, but progressive, is developed by its own exercise; it causes the organism to pass from the state of plant to that of zoophyte, finally to reach complete animality. And here ends the action of the powers of nature: they are (to repeat) the mother who furnishes the matter, and the father who gives the form, the stars whence emanates the vital principle. To enable the creature to overpass the interval which separates animality from humanity, we must have recourse to Him who is the Primal Mover. As soon as the organism of the brain has reached its term, God casts a glance filled with love upon the great work which has just been accomplished, and touches it with a potent breath. The divine breath draws to itself the principle of activity which it encounters in the body of the child; of the two is made one substance, one soul, which lives, feels, and acts upon itself.[1]

The soul is then single in its essence, for the exercise of one of its faculties in a certain degree of intensity suffices to absorb it entirely.[2] In it, distinct among themselves, yet united and mutually implying one another, three powers exist, vegetative, animal, rational; taken together, they may be compared to a pentagon, which is composed of superposed figures.[1] The soul, present in the members, in all the atoms of living dust of which they are compounded, reveals itself in them by the very exercise of their functions. It is united to the body as cause is to effect, act to potentiality, form to matter.[2] We call it Substantial Form, because it alone constitutes a man that which he is, and its departure causes this wonderful combination to lose its existence and its name.[3] It has its seat in the blood;[4] nevertheless it makes of the brain a species of treasury, wherein it deposits the images which it desires to retain. It has chosen the face whereby to make outward manifestation of itself: there it works; it fashions the flesh to render it transparent to the interior lights of thought; it moulds the features with infinite delicacy, creates the physiognomy, and puts forth its utmost efforts in adorning and embellishing the two features through which it more especially reveals itself—the eyes and the mouth. They may be called the two balconies whereon the queen that dwells within the human edifice often shows herself, although veiled.[1] Finally, the queen's ministers are the spirits of the senses, vapors formed in the heart and distributed through all the members, subtile fluids which keep up the communications between the cerebral organ and the organs of the senses.[2] But the queen may become a slave. There are certain constitutional defects which oppose themselves to the free development of the soul; there are gross and darkened natural dispositions into which the light from God penetrates with difficulty.[3] The revolutions of the heavens, also those of the seasons, by means of the physical dispositions which they induce, exert an undeniable influence over the moral faculties. And, as to the four ages of human life correspond in the body four temperaments which result from the combination of the watery, the hot, the dry, and the cold, so does the soul pass through four phases, of which each one has its own distinct character, its charms, and its drawbacks, its more familiar vices, and its favorite virtues.[1]

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[1] Convito, iv., 21.—This doctrine is further developed in the celebrated passage, Purgatorio, xxv., 13. Cf. Aristot. *De Generat. Animal.*, ii., 3. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 119, art. 2.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 32.

[2] Purgatorio, iv., 2.

Whenever by delight or else by pain,
  That seizes any faculty of ours,
  Wholly to that the soul collects itself,
It seemeth that no other power it heeds;
  And this against that error is which thinks
  One soul above another kindles in us.

Cf. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 76, art. 3. The argument is literally the same.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxv., 26; Convito, ii., 8; iv., 7.—Cf. Aristot. *de Anima*, ii., 3: iii., 12. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 78. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 32.

[2] Inferno, xxvii., 25; Paradiso, ii., 45.

While I was still the form of bone and pulp, etc.

Convito, iii., 2.—Cf. Aristot., *de Anima*, ii., 1. —St. Thomas, 1a, q. 75, 1.

[3] Purgatorio, xviii., 17. —Cf. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 76, 4.

[4] Purgatorio, v., 26.

. . . The blood wherein I had my seat.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxxiii., 27; Paradiso, i., 8.; Convito, iii., 8.—Cf. Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, l., i., cap. xv., and especially St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 37-59, where may be found curious anticipations of Lavater and of Gall.

[2] Convito, ii., 2, 14; iii., 9. *Vita Nuova*, 3, 6. Paradiso, xxvi., 24.

[3] Convito, iv., 20.

Death interrupts this harmony. But among all the brutal opinions current among men, the most insensate, the vilest, and most dangerous, is that which denies the existence of another life.[2] It finds its condemnation in the teaching of the most illustrious schools, in that of all the poets of antiquity, of all the religions of the world, of every society which has lived subject to law; in the hope of a future existence placed by nature in the depths of every soul, and which could not be deceptive without supposing an impossible contradiction in the heart of the most perfect work of creation; in the experience of dreams and visions wherein men have held intercourse with immortal beings; and finally, in the dogmas of the Christian faith, which faith furnishes us with the highest degree of certitude, because it emanates from Him who has bestowed upon us that very immortality. When then the soul is separated from the dying flesh, it bears with it all the divine and all the human faculties which properly pertain to it: the divine, as memory, intellect, and will, grown still more active; the human, including all that may be ranged under the term sensibility, temporarily inert. The soul's merit or its demerit, as an impelling force, determines the place of chastisement, of expiation, or of recompense, which it will occupy. As soon as it reaches the place assigned to it, it exercises around itself, in the ambient air, the formative power with which it is endowed. And, as the humid atmosphere becomes colored by the rays that are reflected within it, so does the air take on the new form impressed upon it; thence results a subtile body, wherein each sense has its organ, each thought its exterior expression; wherein the soul recovers the functions of its animal life, and reveals its presence by words, smiles, or tears.[1] This is what was

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[1] Convito, iv., 2, 23-28. —Cf. Albert. Magn., *Metaurorum*, iv. —Ægid. Columna, *de Regimine princip*. l. i., part 1, cap. vi.

[2] Convito, ii. 9. I say that of all brutal opinions, that is the most stupid, vile, and pernicious, which believes that after this life there is no other; because if we turn over the writings of philosophers, as well as of other wise writers, all agree that there is in us a part which is immortal, etc. . . This is also certified by the most true doctrine of Christ.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxv. 27. L.

> It separates from the flesh, and virtually
> Bears with itself the human and divine;
> The other faculties are voiceless all;
> The memory, the intelligence, and the will
> In action far more vigorous than before . . .
> Soon as the place there circumscribeth it,
> The virtue informative rays round about,
> As, and as much as, in the living members . . .
> So there the neighboring air doth shape itself
> Into that form which doth impress upon it

meant by the ancients when they peopled the kingdom of death with shades; and this is the opinion of several more recent philosophers who cannot conceive the possibility of sufferings and enjoyments without the possession of some corporeal envelop.[1] But the shadow must one day pass away in presence of the reality, and these temporary bodies will give place to those which, reanimated arise from their tombs; for, if corruptibility is the common law of creatures, it is that of those only which are the product of the action of other created beings: thus perish things that are produced by the concurrence of the primal matter and the influence of the stars, but thus do not perish those that issue directly from the hands of the Creator. The Eternal does not communicate a life

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Virtually the soul that has stood still . . .
Since afterwards it takes from this its semblance,
It is called shade; and thence it organizes
Thereafter every sense, even to the sight.

[1] Convito, ii. 9. I say corporeal and incorporeal, from the divers opinions that I find on this subject.—Cf. St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 13, 159, 162, where he rejects this opinion as rash, but still allows of the doubt.—See also Origen and St. Irenæus, cited by Brucker (*Hist. crit. Phil., in Platone*), as having admitted the existence of a subtile body accompanying the soul after death. We find it again, with curious developments, in the fragments of the commentary of Proclus on the 10th book of Plato's Republic, published by Cardinal Mai.—*Auctores classici*, 1. See also the Thesis on Proclus by M. Berger.

that can be exhausted; humanity is His work; humanity entire, soul and body, was formed by His hands, animated by His breath, on the sixth day of the creation of the world: on the last day, it will live again, whole and entire, body and soul.[1]

2. A detailed analysis will lead us farther into the knowledge of ourselves.

Among intellectual phenomena, the first, which we may call elementary, are the sensations; and among these, the most complicated are those pertaining to the sense of vision. Objects do not really come in contact with the eye: it is their forms which are transmitted by a sort of impulsion through the diaphanous air; they are arrested in the liquid of the pupil, where they are reflected as if in a mirror. There, they are received by the spirits employed in the service of the sight, which in their turn transmit and present them to the brain: and thus it is that we see. Every sensation is thus accomplished by a communication from the object to the brain, across a continuous medium or series of media.[1] The lower portion of the cerebral viscus is the common source of sensibility. There dwells that common sense wherein all the impressions received by the organs are collected and compared. Yet, the predominance of one of these impressions effaces the others: the soul, when held by the charm of a spectacle enchanting the eyes, takes no note of the flight of time which the faithful clock announces to the ears.[2] Sensibility is in a manner prolonged by the assistance of the imagination. Nevertheless, the imagination, freed from the influences of the earth, may be enlightened by a celestial splendor. Often does it ravish us out of ourselves to such a degree that we may remain deaf to the sound of a thousand trumpets blaring beside us.[3] Finally, sensations primarily indicate only sensible qualities, and yet they make known certain dispositions in the object whence they emanate; they are accompanied by a feeling of usefulness or of peril. There is then a faculty which takes hold of them, disengages and seizes upon the relations implicitly perceived, and proposes them to the operation of the understanding: we call it, thus restoring to its primitive value a word long debased, Apprehension.[1] Thus, the sensible fact is the necessary element of every intelligible notion. This initiative of the senses in the operations of the human mind, is one of the fatalities of our nature, the principal source of our weakness; it is, at the same time, strange to say, the condition of our rational perfectibility, and consequently of our greatness.[2]

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[1] Paradiso, vii. 23-49. L.

Whate'er from this immediately distils
Has afterward no end, etc . . . .
And thou from this mayst argue furthermore
Your resurrection, if thou think again
How human flesh was fashioned at that time
When the first parents, both of them were made.

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i. 1.

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[1] Convito, iii., 9. A detailed description of the phenomenon of sensation.

[2] Purgatorio, iv., 3. L.

And hence whenever aught is heard or seen
Which keeps the soul intently bent upon it,
Time passes on, and we perceive it not, etc.

[3] Purgatorio, xvii., 5. L.

O thou, Imagination, that dost steal us
So from without sometimes, that man perceives not,
Although around may sound a thousand trumpets,
Who moveth thee, if sense impel thee not?
Moves thee a light, which in the heaven takes form.

Imagination and Apprehension mark two points of transition between passivity and activity. Above this first, lower region of the soul, disturbed by importunate and often deceptive appearances, rises the superior region, where all is spontaneous, pure, and luminous. The ancients called it *mens*: by it is man distinguished from the animals.[1] We find in it divers faculties: that which constitutes science, that which gives counsel, that which invents, and that which judges. We may contrast with one another, the intellect, which marches boldly in search of the unknown, and the memory, which returns upon the traces left by the other faculty, without being able to follow them to the end.[2] We may still farther distinguish the active and the passive intellect. The active intellect elaborates and combines the perceptions received; it raises them to the condition of ideas, and, in their turn, combines the ideas. Thought thinks itself, yet is unconscious of itself at its first beginning; [3] it is by prolonged labor that it acquires the knowledge and possession of itself; activity, carried to its highest degree, becomes reflection. The passive intellect contains in potentiality universal forms, such as they exist in act in the Divine Thought. Through this faculty is it that all things may be comprehended; it hence remains necessarily indeterminate, susceptible of divers modifications, and it is also called the possible intellect.[1]

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[1] Purgatorio, xviii., 8.

Your apprehension from some real thing
An image draws, and in yourselves displays it
So that it makes the soul turn unto it.

[2] Paradiso, iv., 14.

To speak thus is adapted to your mind,
Since only through the sense it apprehendeth
What then it worthy makes of intellect.

Cf. for the whole of this paragraph, Aristot., *de Anima*, ii., 7; iii., 3. 4, 8. —St. Thomas, 1a, q. 78, 4; q. 84, 5, 6.—Boethius, lib. v., metr. 4.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 45.

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[1] Convito, iii., 2. Only of man and of the divine substances is this mind predicated.—Cf. Boethius, lib. i., pros. 4.

[2] Convito, iii., 2: Inferno, ii., 3; Paradiso, i., 3.

* * * * In drawing near to its desire
Our intellect ingulphs itself so far,
That after it the memory cannot go.

Cf. Aristot., *de Anima*, iii., 3, 4.

[3] Paradiso, x., 12.

I was not conscious, saving as a man
Of a first thought is conscious ere it come.

We must recognize in the human mind still other elements which present a passive character. We perceive in it primitive ideas of which we cannot explain the origin, self-evident truths which are believed without being demonstrated.[2] And, if we refuse to confess such ideas innate, we are at least obliged to admit as such the faculties which form the very foundation of our being.[1] There are then principles that have not come to us from without, and that we have not gotten for ourselves. There is a continuous interior creation which proclaims the invisible presence of the Divinity.[2] At the upper term of his nature, as at the lower, by his reason as by his senses, man touches upon that which is not himself, and finds the limits which restrict his independence.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxv., 21. Allusion to an error of Averroes.

> * * * * In his doctrine separate
> He made the soul from possible intellect.

Convito, iv., 21. Cf. Aristot., *de Anima*, iii., 5, 6; and for the refutation of Averroes, St. Thomas, *Sum. c. Gent.*, ii., 73; and the two treatises of Albert the Great and St. Thomas, *Contra Averrhoestas*.

[2] Purgatorio, xviii., 19.

> But still, whence cometh the intelligence
> Of the first notions, man is ignorant, etc.

Cf. Aristot., *Anal.*, post., i., 31.

Paradiso, ii, 15.

> * * * * Self-evident
> In guise of the first truth that man believes.

Cf. Aristot., *de Anima*, iii., 9. *Topic.*, i., 1.

These facts well established will serve to mark the way that leads from ignorance and error to true science. The first act of a conscientious study will be to fix the limits where such study must come to an end, and beyond which it would be rash to wish to pursue the rationale of things. The second will be to get rid of prejudices previously imbibed; for they who have learned nothing attain to really philosophical habits of thought more easily than do others, who, together with long training, have received many false opinions.[3] These preliminary conditions fulfilled, it is permissible to begin effective researches. The wise man will first drink deeply at the sources of observation, and will then slowly advance by the way of reasoning; he will wear lead upon his feet: never, without seeking the aid of a helpful distinction, will he make the two different steps of affirmation and negation.[1] He will not allow himself to be detained by the distractions he may meet upon the way: if new thoughts come athwart the path of the old ones, they mutually delay one another in their onward course, and all recede from the goal.[2] Three words sum up these precepts: experience, prudence, and perseverance. By this means may we enter into that calm possession of the truth which constitutes certitude. Certitude rests upon different bases, according to the different orders of knowledge in which it is to be acquired. It is in the testimony of the senses when it relates to objects proper to any one of them; it is in the indemonstrable axioms which have already been pointed out; it is in the unanimous consent of men on questions lying within the domain of reason: for the hypothesis of universal deception, enveloping the human race in an invincible blindness, would be a blasphemy horrible to utter.[1] And yet, at the feet of known truths, new doubts are always springing up, as new shoots start from the bases of trees. Certitude remains always surrounded by the obscurity inherent in all things human. The only light in which is no darkness, is the light of faith.[2]

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[1] Purgatorio, xviii., 21.

Innate within you is the power that counsels.

[2] Convito, iv., 21: In this soul are present the power proper to itself, the intellectual, and the divine.—Cf. Plato,—Cicero, *de Senectute*, 21.—Lib. *de Causis*, 3: Omnis anima nobilis habet tres operationes. . . operatio animalis, intellectualis, et divina.

[3] *De Monarchia*, lib. i. Facilius et perfectius veniunt ad habitum philosophicæ veritatis qui nihil unquam audiverunt, quam qui audiverunt per tempora et falsis opinionibus imbuti sunt. . . Paradiso. xiii. 41.

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[1] Paradiso, ii., 32.

> * * * Experiment, * * * * *
> * * * which is wont to be
> The fountain to the rivers of your arts.

Ibid., xiii., 38.

> And lead shall this be always to thy feet,
> To make thee like a weary man, move slowly
> Both to the *Yes* and *No* thou seest not.

[2] Purgatorio, v., 6.

> For evermore the man in whom is springing
> Thought upon thought, removes from him the mark,
> Because the force of one the other weakens.

Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Instit. Monast.*, iv.

3. In the moral order, the first facts we encounter are again in the number of those in which the soul shows itself passive; this is why they are called *passions.* It would take long to enumerate them, but they may all be referred to anterior dispositions which we may call appetites. There are three sorts of appetites. The first, natural, which is unconscious of itself, and which is indeed the irresistible tendency of all physical beings toward the

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[1] Convito, iv., 8; ii., 9.—Cf. Aristot. *Topic.*, lib. i., cap. I.— St. Thomas, prima, q. 85, art. 6.

[2] Paradiso, iv., 44.—Convito, ii., 9; iv., 15. The Christian judgment is of superior force, and is the overthrower of every false imputation, thanks to the supreme light of Heaven by which it is illumined.

satisfying of their needs; the second, sensitive, which has its external motor in sensible things, and which is by turns concupiscible or irascible; the third, intellectual, of which the object is appreciable only by the thinking faculty. These appetites again may be reduced to a single common principle, love.[1] From the Creator down to the humblest of creatures, nothing escapes this great law.[2] Simple bodies tend by attraction, which is a sort of love, to the point in space destined to receive them. Composite bodies have a sympathy, a love of the same kind as the preceding, for the places where they were formed: they there acquire the plentitude of their development, they draw thence all their powers. Plants show a preference, a marked affection, for such climates, exposures, and soils as are best suited to their constitutions. Animals give signs of a livelier species of attachment, a love easily recognizable which mutually attracts them to one another, and sometimes attracts them to man. Finally, man is endowed with a love, proper to himself, for all things virtuous and perfect; or rather, as his nature partakes both of the simplicity and of the immensity of the divine nature, man unites in himself all these various kinds of love. Like to simple bodies, he yields to attraction, which acts on him as weight; he borrows from composite bodies the sympathy which he feels for the place of his birth; like the plants, he has preferences for the ailments favorable to his health; like the animals, he is attracted by appearances which flatter his senses; and finally, and this is his human, or rather, his angelic prerogative, he loves truth and goodness.[1] Now, the first three sorts of love are the work of necessity; only in the last two, which emanate from the senses and the intelligence, is the moral being discoverable. Here, on closer examination, we shall find the point where passive existence ends and activity begins.

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[1] Convito, iv., 21, 26.—Cf. St. Thomas, 1a 2æ, q. 26, 1.

[2] Purgatorio, xvii., 31. Cary's Tr.

> Creator, nor created being e'er
> .... was without love,
> Or natural, or the free spirit's grcwth, etc.

Cf. Plato. Banquet.--Bœthius, lib. iii., pr. 2; lib. iv., met. 6.

As soon as an object capable of pleasing presents itself, it awakens in us the sensation of pleasure. The faculty we have named *apprehension* enters into exercise, it perceives the relation of the said object to our needs, it develops this relation until the soul turns toward it and bows to its influence: this inclination is love; and the new pleasure accompanying this modification renders it dear to us and at the same time enduring. Then the soul which has been thus thrilled enters into movement: this spiritual movement is desire; this desire can find no repose except in the enjoyment of, that is, the possession of, the object loved.[1] Such is the universal fact; such is, to speak the language of the school, the matter of love, always good in itself, for it is the work of a specific, natural disposition, only revealed by its effects, and of which the first act, instantaneous and not reflected upon, is deserving neither of praise nor of blame.[2] But love becomes virtuous or blameworthy according to the choice which it makes among the things that solicit it. Before the soul took on the corporeal form under which it was to become a child, God looked upon it with complacency. Happy Himself, He communicated to it the impulse which makes it turn to Him in its search for happiness. He continues to attract it by causing the rays of His eternal glory to shine out before it. It, in turn, could no more help loving Him than it could hate itself.[1] If the soul participates more than any other terrestrial being in the divine nature, and if it is a property of the divine nature to will to exist. the soul also wishes to exist, it desires this with all the energy inherent in it, and, as its existence depends altogether upon God, it naturally desires to be united to Him in order to insure its own existence.[2] Then, the attributes of God being reflected in human qualities and human virtues, when the soul finds them in another soul like unto itself, it unites itself spiritually with that soul, it loves it also.[3] Finally, the whole of creation appears to the soul as a field which retains traces of the Eternal Husbandman, and each creature as worthy to be loved according to the measure of good which He has bestowed upon it.[1] Such is the legitimate form of love; it consists in that just proportionment of our affections which primarily bears them on toward the supreme good, and then makes them duly measure themselves out toward lesser goods.[2] Love may take on forms less pure. The ignorant soul is deceived by the first and lowest pleasures which it encounters, and it pursues them with rash ardor.[3] Again, it may grow lax in the pursuit of real good, or worse, it may turn toward evil. We have already seen how the seven capital sins are derived from these three species of aberration.[4] It is then true to say that love is the common seed of justice and of sin.[5] How enumerate all the good and all the evil

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[1] Convito, iii., 3.

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[1] Purgatorio, xviii. 7, 11.

The soul, which is created apt to love,
Is mobile unto everything that pleases,
Soon as by pleasure she is waked to action, * * *
And if, when turned, towards it she incline,
Love is that inclination; it is nature,
Which is by pleasure bound in you anew. * * *
So comes the captive soul into desire,
Which is a motion spiritual, and ne'er rests
Until she doth enjoy the thing beloved.

Cf. Aristot., *de Anima*, iii.—St. Thomas, 1a 2æ, q. 26, 2.

[2] Purgatorio, xviii. 17, 20.

Every substantial form, that segregate
From matter is, and with it is united,
Specific power has in itself collected,
Which without act is not perceptible.....
* * * * * And this first desire
Merit of praise or blame containeth not.

Ibid., 13.

* * * Its matter may perchance appear
Aye to be good; but yet not each impression
Is good, albeit good may be the wax.

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[1] Purgatorio, xvi. 29.

Forth from the hand of Him, who fondles it
  Before it is, like to a little girl
  Weeping and laughing in her childish sport,
Issues the simple soul, that nothing knows,
  Save that, proceeding from a joyous Maker,
  Gladly it turns to that which gives it pleasure.

[2] Convito, iii. 2.—Plato, Phædrus.—St. Thomas, 1a 2æ, q. 10, 1.

[3] *Ibid.*, iii. 2.

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[1] Paradiso, xxvi. 22.—Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Adnotationes in Ecclesiastem.*

[2] Purgatorio, xvii. 33.

While in the first it well directed is,
And in the second moderates itself,
It cannot be the cause of sinful pleasure.

[3] Purgatorio, xvi. 31.

[4] See above, Chap. ii.

[5] Purgatorio, xvii. 35.

Hence thou mayst comprehend that love must be
The seed within yourselves of every virtue,
And every act that merits punishment.

fruit that it may bear: loyalty, the care of the welfare of the beloved object, zeal for its glory, finally, union with it, a union which mutually assimilates to beings and blends them into one?[1] How describe the beneficent, regenerative effect of a chaste affection? And how explain the reciprocal contagion of sensual affections?[2] By working such wonderful revolutions in the secret places of the heart, love, however passive it may be in its origin, shows itself active in its results.

But, if this activity is determined only in presence of the incitements of the exterior world, can we say that it is free? A common and misleading opinion attributes all our actions to the stars, as if the spheres bore along all beings in a necessary direction. Doubtless, the spheres exercise a sort of initiative over the majority of the movements of our sensibility: but this initiative may encounter in us a resistance which, difficult at first, becomes unconquerable after we have faithfully struggled.[3] A still greater

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Cf. Plato, Banquet.—St. Augustine: Boni aut mali mores sunt boni aut mali amores.

[1] Purgatorio, xxx. 13.—Convito, iii. 2; iv. 1 . . . . Onde Pittagora dice Nell 'amista si fa uno di piu. Cf. Cicero., *de Officiis*, i. 16.—St. Thomas, 1: 2æ, q. 28, 1.

[2] Inferno, v. 34.—Purgatorio, xxx. 41; xxxi. 8.—Convito. iii. 8.—*Vita nuova, passim.*—Cf. Plato, Banquet, Phædrus.

[3] Purgatorio, xvi., 23.

Ye who are living every cause refer

power, that of God, acts upon us without compelling us. He created in us that better part of ourselves which is not subject to the influences of the spheres.[1] He endowed us with free will; and this gift, the most excellent, the most worthy of His goodness, the most precious in His eyes, all intelligent creatures, and they alone, have received.[2] The will can yield only by its own

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Still upward to the heavens, as if all things
They of necessity moved with themselves. * *
The heavens your movements do initiate,
I say not all; but granting that I say it,
Light has been given you for good and evil,
And free volition; which if some fatigue
In the first battles with the heavens it suffers
Afterwards conquers all, if well 'tis nurtured.

Cf. Plato, Timaeus. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 83. 1; 1a 2æ, q. 9, 5.

[1] (The substitution of the term *environment* for *influences of the spheres*, will suffice to give a modern turn to many of the passages relating to this subject.—Tr.)

[2] Purgatorio, xvi., 27.

To greater force and to a better nature,
Though free, ye subject are, and that creates
The mind in you the heavens have not in charge.

Ibid. xviii., 23.—Paradiso, v., 7.

The greatest gift that in his largess God
Creating made, and unto His own goodness,
Nearest conformed, and that which He doth prize

determination; it is like a flame, which repeated efforts of an exterior force cannot constrain to descend contrarily to that natural bent which causes it to ascend. Often, it is true, the will seems to yield to violence; but this is still in virtue of its own choice, it is an evil to which it submits through fear of some still greater ill.[1] It is also true that instinctive movements escape from its control, and that often, in its despite, smiles and tears betray the most secret thoughts.[2] But, outside of these circumstances, the will remains the arbiter of its choice: placed in presence of two objects exercising over it equal attraction, it would remain undecided to the end;[3] we must then admit with the will a faculty which may counsel it, which, as the poet says, keeps watch upon the threshold of assent, to receive or to reject affections good or

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Most highly, is the freedom of the will,
Wherewith the creatures of intelligence
Both all and only were and are endowed.

Cf. Aristot. Ethics, iii., 5. Bœthius, l. v., pr. 2.—St. Thomas, prima, q. 59. 3.

[1] Paradiso, iv., 26-34.

[2] Purgatorio, xxi., 35.

But yet the power that wills cannot do all things.

[3] Paradiso, iv., 1.

Between two viands equally removed
And tempting, a free man would die of hunger
Ere either he could bring unto his teeth.

ill.[1] Thus, even supposing that an unavoidable necessity presides in us at the beginning of love, there is also in us a power competent to restrain its progress.

Now, the counsel which assists in our decisions, is discernment. This is the faculty which seizes upon the differences between actions in so far as they are co-ordinated to an end; we may call it the eye of the soul, and the fairest off-shoot springing from the root of reason.[2] By it is the moral connected with the intellectual order: in fact, the will cannot act without the concurrence of the understanding; but this concurrence could not be complete without a perfect equality of the two powers, an equality not to be looked for in our fallen nature.[3] Discernment, when it is applied to the distinction between good and evil, receives the name of conscience, and then one also finds in it a something passive, extraneous to the human personality. For the wicked man, there is in it a gnawing worm which allows him no repose, a scum which he would willingly cast far away from him: for the good man, the feeling of his innocence is like a solid suit of armor or a faithful companion whose presence reassures him in the midst of dangers.[1]

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[1] Purgatorio, xviii., 21.

> Innate within you is the power that counsels,
> And it should keep the threshold of assent.

Cf. St. Thomas, 1a 2æ, q. 14. 2.

[2] Convito, iii., 2; iv., 8.—Cf. St. Thomas, *Prolog. in Ethic. Aristot.*

[3] Paradiso, v., 2; vii., 20; xv., 27.

Here again we must duly consider the observations which have been adduced, and deduce from them practical consequences. The antagonism between vice and virtue had been made the subject of a fable dear to the poets and philosophers of antiquity, as a symbol, and as a lesson. The Italian poet appropriated and rejuvenated it. Two women appeared before him. The one was pale, mis-shapen, and a stammerer, but, when the eye rested upon her, it seemed to give to her beauty, color, and voice: she sang, and, a harmonious syren, she at once captivated imprudent ears. The other, in turn, showed herself simple and worthy of veneration; casting a lofty glance upon her rival, she caused her garments to be rent asunder, and exhibited her tainted by an infectious corruption. Of these two women, the first was Voluptuousness, the second, Wisdom.[2]

But the struggle is easy for him who has not fallen; to contemplate it in all its interest, we must consider it at the doubtful moment when the soul, long held under the sombre sway of vice, escapes from it by a happy deliverance, and strives to re-enter the domain of virtue. The poet has chosen to describe under an allegorical veil of transparent tissue [1] this expiatory pilgrimage, this pathway constructed by mercy which leads from the city of the wicked, to the city of God. Man, in his return to good, may be hindered by obstacles of more than one kind. The first is isolation; this is the fate of him, who, by his fall, has cut himself off from religious society, which alone could offer him the starting point necessary to enable him to begin to rise again. Then comes negligence, which causes men to delay until their last moments, the formation of salutary aspirations; death may come unexpectedly, breaking in upon sterile regrets; or again, the multitude of temporal occupations may leave to spiritual interests a narrowly restricted and sorely disputed place. Still, all these obstacles united cannot authorize despair. Up to the last hour of life, the stem of hope remains green; the flower of repentance may always burst into bloom upon it. [2] Three preliminary conditions form, as it were, the three steps that lead to the threshold of expiation. We must have a faithful conscience which shall reflect in its bright transparency, the image of past faults; a potent sorrow which shall rend and reduce to ashes, the hardness of our hearts; and a firm resolution to satisfy eternal justice by a spontaneous chastisement. But the offender could not be the proper judge of his own sincerity, the arbiter of the amount of tears he ought to shed, the sole executor of the punishment incurred by him. Thence the necessity of an external ministry, of a tribunal for souls, of which the judge, holding in his hand the two keys of science and of authority, may open and shut, according to desert, the gateway of reconciliation.[1] This gate opens the way to a humiliating and laborious career, but one in which the fatigue diminishes, and the ignominy is effaced, in accordance with the diminution in the number of steps still remaining to be trodden ere the goal be reached. But woe to him who should cast a glance backward! for him would vanish the fruit of the trials already happily ended.[2] He who wishes to walk in the way even to the end, must first apply himself to the meditation of the examples furnished him, by profane history and the Holy Scriptures, of the vices to which he had been addicted, and of the contrary virtues. Thus regarded in the living types wherein they have found their most complete expression, vice and virtue cannot be compared without calling forth an energetic preference.[1] From that moment, he will betake himself to the practice of acts contrary to those of which he wishes to obliterate the traces within his soul. Habit, by an equal force. will destroy the pervese dispositions formed by habit, and, itself a second nature, will neutralize the evil tendencies of nature.[2] These efforts, and the resistances they encounter, lead to the employment of voluntary suffering as a means of repressing, or. to speak the language of asceticism, of mortifying, of annihilating unregulated appetites. The image of God which dwelt in the innocent soul has disappeared in the presence of sin: it has left a void which reparative sorrow alone can fill.[3] The combined resources which the most

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[1] Inferno, xxviii., 39.—Purgatorio, xiii., 30.—Cf. Plato, Repub., *passim*. —Cicer.: Mea mihi conscientia pluris quam omnium sermo.—St. Thomas, 1a, q. 79, 13; 1a, 2æ, q. 94, 1.

[2] Purgatorio, xix., 3.

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[1] Purgatorio, viii., 7.

Here, Reader, fix thine eyes well on the truth,
For now indeed so subtile is the veil,
Surely to penetrate within is easy.

[2] Purgatorio, iii., 46; iv., 38; v., 19; vii., 31.

* * * * * Is not so lost
Eternal Love, that it cannot return,
So long as hope has anything of green.

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[1] Purgatorio, ix., 43.

I saw a portal, and three stairs beneath,
Diverse in colour, to go up to it,
And a gate-keeper, who yet spake no word.

Cf. St. Gregory, *Homilia*, xvi., *in Ezechielem.* St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, vi., 25.

[2] Purgatorio, ix., 38, 44.

* * * Forth returns whoever looks behind.

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[1] Purgatorio, *passim*, especially xiii., 13.

[2] Purgatorio, *passim*. Convito, iii., 8.

Cf. Aristot., Ethics, ii., 1.

[3] Purgatorio, xix., 31.—Paradiso, vii., 28.

> And to his dignity no more returns,
> Unless he fill up where transgression empties
> With righteous pains for criminal delights

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, vii., 2.

profound knowledge of the human heart can put at the service of the most steadfast courage, would still prove insufficient. There are secret horrors which return to trouble the memory. The demon of fear comes gliding athwart the paths of penitence.[1] Besides, the work of moral regeneration is a second creation; it could not be accomplished without divine intervention. It is to be solicited by prayer; prayer does violence even to the Almighty, because the Almighty has made to Himself a tender law of permitting Himself to be overcome by love, that He may in His turn overcome by beneficence.[2] Finally, at the term of the expiatory course, as at its beginning, to quit it as well as to enter upon it, we must render submission to a religious authority, and fulfil the conditions without which God does not treat with us: confession for oblivion, tears for consolation, and shame for definitive rehabilitation.[3] Rehabilitation replaces man on the lofty plane which he occupied in the beginning: it remakes him such as he was when he came from the hand of his Creator; it reconstructs for him in the joys of his conscience a sort of moral Eden, the highest degree of blessedness that can be tasted upon earth. This terrestrial beatitude consists in the virtuous exercise of the human faculties, in a constant activity which witnesses to itself as to the legitimacy of its actions.[1] Nevertheless, this is not the last limit which has been set to the happiness of man; or rather, this was the limit set by reason, but revelation has carried it beyond.[2]

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[1] Purgatorio, viii., 31.

[2] Purgatorio, ix., 28; xi., 1; etc., etc.

Purgatorio, vi., 10.—Paradiso, xx., 33.

Regnum cœlorum suffereth violence
  From fervent love, and from that living hope
  That overcometh the Divine volition;
Not in the guise that man o'ercometh man,
  But conquers it because it will be conquered,
  And conquered, conquers by benignity.

Cf. Bœthius, l., v., pros., 6.

[3] Purgatorio, xxxi., 1, etc.—Cf. St. Thomas, 3a q. 84–90.

II.

The same drama that we have seen unfolded in regard to the individual, will be represented also in history, only with other events, and under more solemn forms. The poet contemplates, under figure of a magnificent vision,[3] the religious, and consequently the moral and intellectual destinies of the human race. The scene opens in the terrestrial paradise, a sojourn of ineffable delights, first-fruits of the love of God, the abiding-place of that golden age of which the imperfect remembrance still charmed the dreams of the antique world. But, in presence of the recent marvels of creation, and of the universal obedience which heaven and earth yielded to their Author, woman alone, a creature that had just emerged from nothingness, refused to endure the veil of happy ignorance which covered her eyes. Man became her accomplice: banished, he exchanged joys without a touch of bitterness for misery and tears. And yet, another age of gold was to flourish, and the fallen race to re-enter into its inheritance.[1] This triumphal return is figured by the miraculous procession which comes to take possession of the re-found Eden. Amid Apocalyptic splendors, preceded by twenty-four ancients, who are the writers of the Old Law, surrounded by the four prophetic animals, symbolizing the four Evangelists, and followed by seven other personages, in whom we recognize the authors of the other books of the New Law,[2] Christ advances under the form of a griffon, whose terrestrial body and ærial wings denote the hypostatic union of the two natures, human and divine.[1] He draws a car, emblem of the Church, on which stands a lady clothed in symbolic garments; this is Theology: [2] three nymphs on her right hand, and four upon her left, represent the theological and the cardinal virtues passing on together with harmonious steps. As the hymns resound, sung by the angels, the train progresses and approaches the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which, according to a beautiful tradition, has become the tree of salvation, the redeeming cross.[3] The car remains attached to this tree, and, while the glorious lady, with her seven companions, is left to guard it, the griffon departs with the ancients: Christ, quitting the earth, leaves the Church under the care of knowledge and virtue.[4] But suddenly, an eagle falls like lightning upon the tree, from which he tears the bark, and upon the car, which bends beneath his weight. Then comes a fox which finds its way within, and then a portion is torn off by a dragon that issues from the gaping earth. Thus far it is easy to recognize the persecutions of the Roman emperors which so harried the Church, the heresies by which it was desolated, and the schisms by which it was torn. Soon, the eagle reappeared, less menacing but not less dangerous; he shook his plumes above the sacred car, which speedily underwent a monstrous transformation. From divers parts of it arose seven heads armed with ten horns; a courtesan was seated in the midst; a giant stood at her side, exchanging with her impure caresses which he interrupted to scourge her cruelly. Then, cutting loose the metamorphosed car, he bears it away, and is lost with it in the depths of the forest. Is not this again the Church, enriched by the gifts of princes who have become her protectors, sadly marred in appearance, sundry of her members defiled by the taint of the seven capital sins, and herself ruled over by unworthy pontiffs? Is not this the court of Rome, exchanging criminal flatteries with the temporal power, which flatteries are to be followed by cruel injuries, when the Holy See, torn from the foot of the cross of the Vatican is transferred to a distant land, on the banks of a foreign river?[1] But these ills will not be without end nor

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[1] Purgatorio, xxvii., and following, *De Monarchia*, iii. . . . Beatitudinem hujus vitæ quæ in operatione propriæ virtutis consistit, et per terrestrem paradisum figuratur . . .—Convito, iv., 17.—Cf. Aristot., Ethics, i., 8.

[2] Convito, iv., 22.—Cf. Plato, Epinomis, Repub. vi.

[3] Purgatorio, xxix.-xxxiii.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxix., 9.

For there where earth and heaven obedient were,
The woman only, and but just created,
Could not endure to stay 'neath any veil.

Paradiso, xxvi., 39.—Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Erudit. theolog.*, i. 6.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii. 65.

[2] Purgatorio, xxix., 28, 31, 45.—Cf. Richard of St. Victor, *super Apocalypsum.*

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[1] Purgatorio, xxix., 36.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *in Psalm.*, 90; *in Lucam*, xiii., 34.

[2] Purgatorio, xxx., 11.

> Over her snow-white veil with olive cinct
> Appeared a lady under a green mantle,
> Vested in color of the living flame.

[3] Purgatorio, xxxii., 13.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Serm.*, 1. *de Invent. S. Crucis.* There is also in this allegory a reminiscence of the tree in the vision of Daniel, which is likewise a figure of the cross. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, iv., 21.

[4] Purgatorio, xxxii., 17-30. Dean Plumptre's Tr.

> Alone she sat, on ground of truth the base,
> Left there as guardian of the mystic car.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxxii., 37-53.—We here repeat that we cannot acquiesce in the severity of these judgments, dictated by anger and penned in sorrow.

without retribution. The tree that lost and that saved the world cannot be touched with impunity, and if the Church has been made militant here below, it is with the liability of suffering from passing reverses, but also with the assurance of final victory.[1]

III.

Pursuing this species of induction, with which we have to make ourselves familiar, and which concludes from the varied facts of the visible to the invariable laws of the invisible world, we are led by our thought into the places where expiations begun here below, amid many trials and interruptions, are finished under the operation of an unalterable law. At the same time that souls are there purified from the stains of earth, they are initiated into the joys of heaven. And the sufferings, be they as rigorous as they may in their intensity, find an incomparable solace in the certainty of their finally coming to an end.

1. We may represent to ourselves Purgatory as a mountain, of which the base is laved by the ocean, while the summit touches the heavens. Conical in its structure, it is divided into nine parts. The first division is a sort of vestibule, the inhabitants of which expiate by a proportionate delay the detriment to their souls oc-

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[1] Purgatorio, xxxii., 15; xxxiii., 12.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *in Psalm.* 1; *in Lucam*, xiii., 19. The Church militant is figured by the terrestrial paradise.

casioned by the tardiness of their repentance. Then follow seven concentric circles, one above another, each zone narrower than the one below it: in these is wrought the purification from the seven principal vices, the seven culpable forms of love. Finally, at the top, at the termination of the region of expiations, the terrestrial paradise extends its umbrageous solitudes, into which enter only the regenerated souls who come to drink from two springs, forgetfulness of their errors and remembrance of their merits.[1]

2. They who dwell in these melancholy regions show themselves invested with the subtile bodies of which we have already explained the formation; bodies impalpable, eluding him who would embrace them, not intercepting the light, and yet so organized that suffering may be possible within and visible without.[2] This is why material torments are prepared for them, exactly proportioned to the faults they are to repair: enormous burdens bow-

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[1] Purgatorio, *passim*.

[2] Purgatorio, ii., 27.

O empty shadows, save in aspect only!
Three times behind it did I clasp my hands,
As oft returned with them to my own breast!

Purgatorio, v., 9.

When they became aware I gave no place
For passage of the sunshine through my body,
They changed their song into a long, hoarse "Oh!"

Ibid., xxi., 49; xxv., 35; xxvi., 4.

ing the backs of the proud; hair shirts and blindness for the envious; dense smoke enveloping such as have given way to anger; the incessant onward motion of the slothful; the ignominious posture of the avaricious, groveling upon the earth, the treasures of which they had loved too dearly; hunger emaciating the visages of the gluttonous; the flame whence the voluptuous issue purified. To these pangs are united other penitential means of which Christian asceticism had already made essay in this life—meditation, prayer, and confession.[1]

3. In this rigorous state in which they have been placed by death, the suffering just preserve the memory of their past life, and, if the knowledge of the present is lacking to them, a respectable, because widely spread, opinion attributes to them a knowledge of the future. They then find themselves with their previous faculties, inclinations, and affections, except that all which savored of evil has been eliminated.[2] For them, terrestrial rivalries have vanished with the terrestrial distinctions of which they were the result. If they keep up an interest in the affairs of this nether world, it is through a mutual interchange of compassion and prayers. Initiated into all the mysteries of sorrow, they ask that Heaven may spare such pains to us; and, on our side, our

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[1] Purgatorio, *passim.*—Cf. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, vii., 2, 3.—Cf. Boethius, lib. iv., pros. 4.

[2] Purgatorio, ii., 36; viii., 42; xiv., 24, 33.

prayers and pious works ascend to God whom they incline toward us, to descend again in blessings upon the just whose term of penance they abridge.[1] But conscience, which was given to man to control the impatience of his desires, justifies in their eyes the rigors which they endure; it makes them accept and almost hold dear these reparative sufferings.[2] The thought of the accomplishment of the eternal decrees; the certainty of the happy impossibility of sinning thenceforth in which they find themselves; the hope of the glorious inheritance the possession of which cannot be deferred for them beyond the last day of the world; finally love, which never leaves them; then too the fraternal canticles chanted together, the sacred texts repeated in frequent converse, the peace of cloudless days, and the nights passed under the guardianship of angels; [3] the unity of the *suffering* Church with the Church *militant* and the Church *triumphant:* these are surely consolations sufficient to sustain the soul until the hour of deliverance comes. At that hour, the soul suddenly experiences within itself the feeling of recovered purity and re-conquered freedom: it wills to make trial of its liberty, it finds itself joyous in having thus willed, and, whilst the sacred mountain trembles and innumerable acclamations are heard, it rises, borne only by its own will, toward the spheres of eternal blessedness.[1]

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[1] Purgatorio, vii., 46; xix., 45; xi., 7; iii., 48; iv., 46; v., 25, etc.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, vii., 4.

[2] Purgatorio, xxi., 27; xxvi., 5; xix., 26.

[3] Purgatorio, viii., 9.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, vii., 3. *In magist. sent.*, lib. iv., Dist. 20. p. 1. q. 5. Angels and demons present within the limits of Purgatory.

IV.

After having accompanied humanity through all the phases of this existence, compounded of good and evil, which it has traversed, we must make ourselves acquainted with the medium in which they are accomplished. For, if man reflects within himself nature, as a diminished but yet living image. he, in turn, leaves in nature a reflection of himself, feebler and less animated but more extended. These are two foci, which mutually exchange luminous rays: the first named concentrates, the second, disperses them.

1. The incompleteness of contemporary knowledge reduced to a small number the really scientific explanations of the successive

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[1] Purgatorio, xxi., 25.

It trembles here, whenever any soul
  Feels itself pure, so that it soars, or moves
  To mount aloft, and such a cry attends it.
Of purity the will alone gives proof,
  Which, being wholly free to change its convent,
  Takes by surprise the soul, and helps it ply.

facts in nature. Rain, lightning, volcanoes, the ebb and flow of the sea,[1] all the phenomena which, by their grandeur or by their frequent occurrence, called forth a livelier attention, gave rise to hypotheses unequally satisfactory, rarely connected by any logical bond, and forming among themselves no body of doctrines. On the contrary, the *ensemble* of physical phenomena, the plan, the relations, the reciprocal action of the larger bodies in creation, the system of the visible universe, readily lent itself to general views, to deductions from analogy, to the divinations of the higher metaphysics, to reasonings based upon the consideration of final causes. Philosophy there found itself in its own domain.

2. An inexact but universally admitted cosmography fixed the dimensions of the terrestrial globe, making it 6,500 miles in diameter, and consequently 20,400 miles in circumference.[2] The configuration of this globe was scarcely more accurately known. Jerusalem, the moral centre of humanity, was regarded as also the geographical centre of the continent set apart for the habitation of men.[3] From the sources of the Ebro to the mouths of the Ganges, from the extremity of Norway to the end of Ethiopia, the

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[1] Purgatorio, v., 38.—Paradiso, viii., 25 ; xvi., 28.

And as the turning of the lunar heaven
Covers and bares the shores without a pause.

Paradiso, xxiii., 21.

[2] Convito, ii., 7, *in fine*. [3] Purgatorio, xxvii., 1 ; ii., 1.

inhabited world filled up nearly one hemisphere; [1] the ocean embraced the other; and yet, a prophetic idea made men dream of distant regions beyond the pillars of Hercules, protected against the daring of navigators by a superstitious fear kept up through old legends.[2] Then antipodal regions, placed outside of actual exploration, became the abode and asylum of mystical imaginings. It was natural there to find the site, henceforth inaccessible, of the terrestrial paradise. It seemed a noble thought to place the spot where the first father came into being and lost his race, diametrically opposite to that other sacred spot where the Son of Man died to save that race. Thus the mountain of Eden and the mountain of Jerusalem were as the two poles of the world, and sustained the axis on which it accomplished its revolutions. It seemed also fitting to repeople this primitive land which sin had made a solitude, by placing within it the pains of purgatory, reparative of sin. Consequently, it became proper to represent it (as in fact was done) as a high cone, divided into several zones, at the base of which are lulled all the storms that might disturb the calm of penitence, whilst the summit fades away into the expanse of pure air, where weight ceases to exert its influence, and whence it is easy to lift oneself to the skies.[1] In the contrasted region, beneath the ground on which we tread, open the gulfs of hell At its lowest depth is found the point toward which all bodies tend. There we find also the spirit of evil dwelling in a case of ice. A similar void traverses the depths of the other half of the globe. These subterranean abysses tell of ancient catastrophes. doubtless anterior to the existence of the human race, and yet retained in its memory. Perhaps when the evil angel fell from heaven, the land, which occupied the other hemisphere, was striken with fear at beholding this fall, and made to itself a veil of the sea; then, retreating beneath the heavy weight of the reprobate, it hollowed out these interior cavities, sought refuge in our hemisphere, and formed the continent on which we live.[1]

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[1] Purgatorio, ibid.—Inferno, xxxiv., 42.

[2] Inferno, xxvi., 27.—Paradiso, xxvii., 28.

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[1] Purgatorio, iv., 23; xxi., 20.

* * * * * Imagine Zion
Together with this mount on earth to stand,
So that they both one sole horizon have,
And hemispheres diverse; * * *
Free is it here from every permutation;
What from itself heaven in itself receiveth
Can be of this the cause, and naught beside;
Because that neither rain, nor hail, nor snow,
Nor dew, nor hoar-frost any higher falls
Than the short little stairway of three steps.

Paradiso, i., 31.—Cf. on the geographical and meteorological position of the terrestrial Paradise, Bede, quoted by St Thomas, 1a, q. 102, 1; St. John Damascene, quoted by St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 64; and Isidore *Etymol.*, xiv., 4.

3. Astronomical studies were somewhat more advanced. At least, the apparent revolutions which wrought change in the aspect of the celestial vault, had been described in the books of Ptolemy. Arabian observers had noted several constellations in the vicinity of the Antarctic pole.[2] Certain facts, such as eclipses, the spots on the moon, and the milky way, had suggested felicitous explanations.[3] While failing to recognize the place which the sun

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[1] Inferno, xxxiv., 41.

Upon this side he fell down out of heaven,
And all the land, that whilom here emerged,
For fear of him made of the sea a veil,
And came to our hemisphere; and peradventure
To flee from him, what on this side appears
Left the place vacant here, and back recoiled.

[2] Purgatorio, i., 8; viii., 28.

To the right hand I turned, and fixed my mind
Upon the other pole, and saw four stars, etc.

Cf. M. Biagioli, commentary on this passage.

[3] Paradiso, ii., 21; xiv., 34.— Convito, ii., 14, 15.— Divers astronomical notions, Inferno, xxvi., 43; Purgatorio, iv., 21; xv., 2.— Paradiso, i., 13; xxvii., 27.—Cf. Aristot., *de Cœlo et mundo, passim.*

occupies in the planetary system, observers could not fail to appreciate the greatness of its volume and the importance of its functions: it was saluted as the parent of humanity, the first minister of nature; in it men beheld an image of God.[1] Nor was it without an impression of religious awe that mankind had contemplated the innumerable orbs suspended in immensity. All that was not yet conceded to the stars in distance and in dimensions, was attributed to them in the way of influences. They were presumed to preside over the generation of beings: from them emanated the life distributed throughout all the families of plants, and all the tribes of animals.[2] As a seal makes an impression on the docile wax, so did their power imprint an ineffaceable character on the souls of men at the time of their birth; they continued to intervene in the instinctive movements which precede the exercise of the will: thus was due to them a share in the honors rendered to genius, in the deserts of actions, whether good or bad.

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[1] Paradiso, x., 10-18; xv., 26.

> The greatest of the ministers of nature,
> Who with the power of heaven the world imprints.

Ibid., xxvii., 46. Cf. Plato, Timæus, Repub., vi. Aristot., Physics, ii., 1.

[2] Purgatorio, xxxii., 18.—Paradiso, vii., 47.

> The soul of every brute and of the plants
> By its potential temperament attracts
> The ray and motion of the holy lights.

It even needed a sort of audacity thus to limit their empire and reserve the standing ground of freedom. Temerity did not go so far as to deny the value of horoscopes, or to contest the share of the celestial motions in the events that agitate the earth.[1] We already know what, according to the opinions of the day, were the order and the number of the heavens. The necessity of explaining the universal rotation from east to west had caused to be added to the eight spheres of the planets and the fixed stars, a ninth heaven, called the *primum mobile.*[2] This heaven, in its turn, was presumed to receive its motion from the attraction exercised upon every point of the universe by the enveloping Empyrean, the abode of the Divinity, filled with light, heat, and love. Love is the last word of the system of the world: it is love that gives rise to the harmony of the spheres, a doctrine so renowned among the thinkers of antiquity, a problem solved in the mathematical laws of modern science.[1]

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[1] Inferno, xv., 19. — Purgatorio, xvi., 25; xx., 5; xxx., 37.— Paradiso iv., 20; xiii., 34, 44; xxii., 38.

> O glorious stars, O light impregnated
> With mighty virtue, from which I acknowledge
> All of my genius, whatsoe'er it be.

Convito, ii., 7.— Cf. Plato, Timæus.—Aristot., *de Gen.* ii., 3.

[2] Paradiso, xxiii., 38; xxvii., 34.—Convito, ii., 3, 4.—Cf. St. Thomas 1a, q. 68, 4.

[3] Purgatorio, xxvi., 20.—Paradiso, xxx., 14.—Cf. Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis.*—Plato, Phædrus.—St. Thomas, 1a, q. 66, 2.

4. But the object of this immense and multiform love, the Being who continually moves the worlds by attracting them to Himself, is none other than God.[2] He has set His own likeness in the admirable order which is the form of creation; He has left His footprints in the beings that compose it, by giving to them, according to their degree of perfection, an instinct which makes them contribute in due proportion to the general order. Thus a potent impulse causes each creature to pass in some determinate direction across the great sea of existence, expands fire, condenses the earth, makes hearts beat, and arouses intelligences.[3] Thus nature

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[1] Paradiso, i., 26.—Cf. Plato, Rep., x.—Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis.*—Plato, Banquet.—Bœthius, lib. ii., pros. 5.

[2] Paradiso, i., 25.

* * * * Love who governest the heaven
* * * * The wheel which thou dost make eternal
Desiring thee, made me attentive to it
By harmony thou dost modulate and measure.

Cf. Aristotle, Metaphysics, xii.—Bœthius, lib. i, metr. 5.—St. Thomas 1a q. 2, art. 3.

[3] Paradiso, i., 35.

* * * * All things whate'er they be
Have order among themselves, and this is form,
That makes the universe resemble God....
Hence they move onward unto ports diverse
O'er the great sea of being; and each one
With instinct given it which bears it on.

Ibid. viii., 4.—The great *sea of existence* is an expression employed by St. John Damascene.—Cf. St. Thomas, 1a, q. 5, 3.

may be considered as a divine art wrought by the Eternal Artist. Art may be considered under three relations: in the thought of the artist, in the instrument which he employs, and in the matter that he fashions. Similarly, nature is first in the thought of God; thus far it is God Himself, and in this point of view it is inviolable, irreproachable, indefectible. Nature is then in the heavens as in an instrument by means of which the supreme goodness is exteriorly reproduced; and, as this instrument is perfect, nature is also there without flaw. It is finally in the matter fashioned; and there alone is it that the divine action and the celestial influence encounter a radical principle of imperfection which they may correct but not destroy: there alone is found in nature the antagonism between good and evil.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, i., 1; x., 4; xxxi., 8; viii., 39.—Inferno, xi., 33.—*De Monarchia*. ii. —Cf. Plato, Theætet. Timæus.—Chalcidius, *in Timæum* 4, 339, 408. *De Causis* 20: "Diversificantur bonitates et dona ex concursu recipientis.... *Ibid.*, 24. And, as great thoughts are perpetuated in great minds, see in the *Elevations* on the Mysteries, by Bossuet, the seventh *Elevation*, 2d week: *De La Fe condite des arts.*

CHAPTER IV.

Good.

In the course of these researches, Good has already often revealed itself, but partially, as if in shadow or behind a cloud. The time has now come to look upon it face to face, to reach it by rising from the known to the unknown—from man to society, from this mortal life to immortality, from creatures confined within the limitations of matter and of time to superior beings who never were subjected to such bonds.

I.

1. Good, for man, is that which he ought to be; it is the last end of his existence. This end may be considered both as exterior, since we tend toward it, and as interior, since a time comes when we attain it. Good perceived as without, the possession of which we strive to obtain, is happiness; good conceived as within, and which we are to realize in ourselves, is called perfection.

The end of man is made manifest to him by an instinct which divine goodness has placed in him as a germ, obscure in its beginnings, and easy to confound with the common appetites of the brutes.[1] He first perceives the existence of some unknown thing to which he aspires, in which alone his desires will find repose. Then he seeks it: considering the beings that surround him, he distinguishes and prefers himself. Then he distinguishes in himself several parts; he prefers that which is the most noble, namely, the soul: and, as it is natural to take pleasure in the enjoyment of the thing loved, he takes pleasure above all in the use of the faculties with which his soul has been endowed.[2] He thence learns that he was not born to lead the gross life of the brutes, but to love and to know.[3] Now, if the two principal faculties of the soul are intellect and will, two kinds of functions are to be attributed to it—the first, speculative, and the second, practical. Hence, there are for man two destinies here below; the one active, wherein he seeks to labor himself; the other contemplative, wherein he considers the operations of God and of nature. These two destinies, figured in the Old Testament by Lia and Rachel, and in the New, by Martha and Mary, are represented in the poem by Matilda, the great countess, the indefatigable ally of Gregory VII., and by Beatrice, the inspired saint.[1] Active life, by developing the will of man, leads him to a first degree of perfection, and the consciousness he has of this perfection attained, gives him a first measure of happiness. But the contemplative life is the better part, since it consists in the exercise of the most excellent faculty, the intelligence. Now the intelligence cannot here below attain to its most complete exercise, which is, to contemplate the Being sovereignly intelligible, God. Hence, the end which is truly the last end, perfection and happiness really worthy of the name, are not to be attained in this world. The three women who went to visit the Saviour at the sepulchre, did not find Him there, but they found in His place an angel who said to them: He is not here, you will see Him elsewhere. Similarly, three schools, that of Epicurus, that of Zeno, and that of Aristotle, seek, in the terrestrial sepulchre which we inhabit, the sovereign good and fail to find it. But the interior feeling which, like a heavenly messenger, comes to us from above, makes known to us that in another life that Good awaits us.[1]

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[1] Convito, iv., 22: From the divine goodness sowed within and infused into us from the beginning of our generation, arises a growth which the Greeks call *hormen*, that is, the appetite of the natural mind, etc.

[2] Purgatorio, xvii., 43.—Convito, iv., 22.—Cf. Plato, Banquet, Phædrus. —St. Thomas, 1a, 2æ, q. 10, art. 1.

[3] Inferno, xxvi., 40.

Consider ye the seed from which ye sprang;
Ye were not made to live like unto brutes,
But for pursuit of virtue and of knowledge.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxvii., 33; xxviii., 15; xxx., 11.—Convito, iv., 17; ii., 5, etc. —Cf. Aristot., Ethics, i., 6; x., 8; vii., 14.—Lia and Rachel, Richard of St. Victor, *de Praepar. ad contempl.*, 1. (Commentators differ greatly in regard to the personality of Matilda. Tr.)

Thus the confused instinct, the awakening of which we have indicated, is no other than the love of Good, the innate and undying thirst for unbounded happiness. It neutralizes in us the power of the laws of nature which would keep us chained to this earth; it lifts us into a higher and purer sphere; it leads us beyond the ordinary conditions of humanity, and, to express in a new word the new existence into which it initiates us, it *transhumanates* us.[2] We are mere defective mites, but one day, when our formation is completed, we shall be given wings wherewith to fly toward the supreme good. We are as creeping worms, but these worms will develop into angelic butterflies.[1]

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[1] Convito, iv., 22: By these three women may be understood the three sects of the active life, namely, the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Peripatetics, who go to the sepulchre, that is, to the present world which is the receptacle of corruptible things, and ask for the Saviour, that is to say, beatitude, and do not find Him, but they do find a youth in white garments, who... is our nobility which comes from God... and he says to each one of these sects, that is, to whomsoever goes seeking beatitude in the active life, that it is not here ... etc.—Cf. Plato, Epinomis.—St. Thomas, 1a, 2æ, q. 3, art. 8.

[2] Paradiso, iv., 42; xxxiii., 10.—*Ibid.*, ii., 7, and i., 24.

> The con-created and perpetual thirst
> For the realm deiform did bear us on,
> As swift almost as ye the heavens behold...
> To represent *transhumanise* in words
> Impossible were....

Cf. Bœthius, lib. iv., metr. 1.—St. Bonaventura, *Itin. mentis ad Deum.*

2. If science is the sovereign beatitude of the intelligence, it cannot fail to attract all men by arousing in them the insatiable desire of knowing, and, on the other hand, it must satisfy this need by spreading itself abroad without being exhausted, giving itself to all without suffering division. It cannot then allow itself to be acquired except on the condition of being in turn communicated; thus it gives rise to two species of the exercise of thought—study and teaching.[2] Now, study and teaching, to attain their purpose, have need of a direction which long habit

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[1] Purgatorio, x., 42.

> Do ye not comprehend that we are worms,
> Born to bring forth the angelic butterfly
> That flieth unto judgment without screen?
> Why floats aloft your spirit high in air?
> Like are ye unto insects undeveloped,
> Even as the worm in whom formation fails!

[2] Paradiso, ii., 4.

> Ye other few who have the neck uplifted
> Betimes to th' bread of Angels upon which
> One liveth here and grows not sated by it. . .

Convito, i., 1.—Cf. Aristot., Metaphys., 1. St. Dionysius the Areopagite, *de Cœlesti Hierarchia*, vii.

alone can give them. The habits which direct thought receive the name of intellectual virtues. They have their reward in the possession of the truth to which they lead; the more sublime the truths, the sweeter and more precious is their possession. Thus the few and incomplete notions which we can have of invisible things, give rise to more joy in the human mind than the profuse and certain information which we obtain through the senses.[1] We have elsewhere mentioned the discouragements and illusions which appear to deprive us of access to philosophical truths. We must not forget the wonderful assistance which causes us to triumph over these obstacles: the sudden flashes of light illumining the darkened understanding, the inspirations reviving the exhausted imagination, and that power which is manifested in certain persons, unexpected, impersonal, irresistible, which men have thought descended directly from heaven, witness the name which they have given to it, genius.[2]

3. To the need of knowing, corresponds the need of loving. Or rather, the same germ of love, which by a wise intellectual culture turns toward the true, when compassed about with a wise moral culture, will be directed toward that which is good.[3] A

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[1] Convito, iv. 17; ii., 3. Cf.—Intellectual Virtues, Aristot., Ethics, ii., 1; vi., *passim.*

[2] See above, Paradiso, xxii., 38.—Inferno, ix., 22, etc.

[3] Convito, iv., 22.—Cicero, *Tuscul.*, iii.

providential initiative is exerted within us unknown to ourselves; it is shown by felicitous dispositions varying with the ages of life. Adolescence has for its own, obedience and sweetness, modesty and beauty: modesty, which comprises humility, purity, and shame; beauty, which consists in the proportion and healthfulness of all the parts of the body, in their fidelity in conveying the impressions of the soul, in corresponding to its impulses. The ornaments of youth are tenderness, courtesy, loyalty, temperance, and strength. We may say that the last two are the bridle and the spur which reason employs in governing the appetites, as the rider governs a generous steed. Old age is the time when the laborious acquisitions of past years are to be communicated: it is the hour when the rose opens and sheds abroad its perfume. The qualities proper to it are: prudence, justice, beneficence, and affability. Finally, the last age rests in a serene and pious expectation of death, in a grateful remembrance of past days, in an affectionate aspiration toward God, who is very near.[1] Thus far we have enumerated only the simple dispositions which may be found innate in the soul. But, on the one hand, if they have not been thus deposited as seed, they may be engrafted by education.[2] And on the other, the will must co-operate to insure their lossoming and their definitive fructification. By repeated acts it makes them pass from the state of simple dispositions to the state of habits. Now, a habit of the will which causes the proper means to be selected between opposing excesses, constitutes that in which consists virtue.[1] We may count eleven moral virtues: courage, temperance, liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, the moderate love of public charges, mansuetude, affability, veracity, amenity, and finally, justice.[2]

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[1] Convito, iv., 24-28.

[2] Convito, iv., 21, 22.

We may again, in accordance with a still more renowned classification, distinguish the Cardinal and the Theological virtues. The former are four in number: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. These have their root in nature, and their recompense in the happiness of this life. They then have existed among men of every time—the precursors of revelation, preparing the way before it.[3] The three other virtues, unknown to those who have not been visited by revelation, descended from heaven in company with revelation, and they will one day return whence they came. These are, faith, hope, and charity.[1]

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[1] Convito, iv., 17. Cf. Aristot., Ethics, ii., 6. St. Thomas, 1a 2æ, q. 134, art. 3.

[2] Convito, iv., 17. Cf. Aristot., Ethics, iii., 6; iv., *passim.*

[3] Purgatorio, xxix., 44.

> Upon the left hand four made holiday
> Vested in purple, following the measure
> Of one of them with three eyes in her head.

Paradiso, x., xiv., xviii., xxi., *passim. De Monarchia*, iii. Convito iv., 22.—Cf. Plato, Laws, 1.—Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.

Faith may be defined, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: the substance, for they have for us in this world no other reality than that which our belief gives to them; and the evidence, because these beliefs become the essential premises of every ulterior syllogism.[2] Hope is the certain expectation of future reward, based upon the knowledge of the goodness of God, and on the consciousness of a sincere effort made to correspond with assistance received.[3] And last comes charity, the love of that ineffable good which philosophical reasoning and sacred authority concur in making us recognize as the necessary object of our affections; of that living good which runs to meet love, as light tends to the body capable of reflecting it; which is multiplied by being shared, which gives itself with so much the more effusiveness as it is sought with more ardor, and makes itself be the more loved where there are a greater number who love it.[1] But this love, the only one that is equally without jealousy and without deception, and the faith and hope accompanying it, all three divine virtues, are not sparks from an ordinary flame; they are pure rays emanating immediately from Him who is the Sun of souls, who enlightens and enkindles souls here below, while waiting until He shall draw them nearer to Himself and envelop them in His glory. This supernatural and gratuitous action (generating and remunerating virtue), the existence of which we must admit if we have seriously examined the mysterious phenomena of the moral world, is itself a mystery, and we name it, Grace.[1]

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[1] Purgatorio, xxix., 41; xxxi., 37. *De Monarchia.* iii.—Cf. on the Seven Virtues, Hugh of St. Victor, *Sermo* 39, and St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 61-62.

[2] Paradiso, xxiv., 22.

Faith is the substance of the things we hope for,
 And evidence of those that are not seen; * * *
 * * * They exist there only in belief, * * *
And it behoveth us from this belief
 To reason without having other sight,
 And hence it has the nature of evidence.

Cf. St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 4, 1.

[3] Paradiso, xxv., 23.

Hope, said I, is the certain expectation
 Of future glory, which is the effect
 Of grace divine and merit precedent.

Cf. St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 62, 4.

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[1] Paradiso, xxvi., 9.

* * * * By philosophic arguments,
And by authority that hence descends,
Such love must needs imprint itself in me;
For Good, so far as good, when comprehended,
Doth straight enkindle love, and so much greater
As more of goodness in itself it holds. . . .

Purgatorio, xiv., 29 ; xv., 23.

That goodness infinite and ineffable
Which is above there, runneth unto love,
As to a lucid body comes the sunbeam.
So much it gives itself as it finds ardor,
So that as far as charity extends,
O'er it increases the eternal valor.
And the more people thitherward aspire,
More are there to love well, and more they love there,
And, as a mirror, one reflects the other.

Cf. St. Bernard, *de Deo diligendo.*—St. Thomas, secunda secundæ, q 23, q. 45, 2.

II.

1. In the beginning, the whole species was contained in a single man; and the perfections which have been described were united in the first father, the type of the human race of which he was to be the progenitor. Also, the almighty power that created him endowed him with all the science that a soul set in a vessel of flesh could contain. This exuberant thought felt the need of producing itself exteriorly: he required a means of expression, intelligible to the mind and transmissible by the senses. This necessity engendered language. The primitive language, created

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[1] Purgatorio, viii., 32.—Paradiso, x., 29; xxviii., 37.

The radiance of grace, by which is kindled
True love, and which thereafter grows by loving.

St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 110, 1.

with the first soul, was perfect, as was that soul: man called all creatures by their names, the said names being not arbitrary terms, but words bearing with them their own definition. [1] After the fall, science and the primitive language were both lost; the idioms, abandoned to the caprices of the divers races, varied and renewed themselves like the leaves of the forest. Only, as the first word, the root of the original language, had been a movement toward God, indeed, the very name of God (*El*), so is the root of the fallen tongues an interjection expressing grief. (*Heu*!) [2] Thus have we seen systems and schools multiplied, having nothing in common but their inadequacy. The plenitude of science could be refound nowhere save in a man in whom human nature should be renewed and uplifted: it dwelt in the sacred breast that was pierced on Calvary by the lance of a soldier.[1] Thence it was to be diffused among the sages of the sanctuary, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, within that Catholic School where so many noble minds were to meet and to follow one another. Such were Dionysius the Areopagite, he who with his mortal eyes penetrated the most deeply into celestial things; Boethius, who on the eve of martyrdom, unveiled, and at the same time consoled, all the miseries hidden beneath the illusions of this world; Isidore, Bede, Rabanus Maurus, Anselm, Bernard, Peter Damian; Peter the Lombard, who said that he accounted himself happy to be able to cast his *Sentences*, like the widow's mite, into the treasury of the temple; Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, who showed themselves in their contemplations to be something more than mere thoughtful men. Such were again, in times nearer to our own, Peter the Spaniard and Albert the Great; Bonaventura, who bore with him into the functions of an active ministry the lofty mental absorption of Christian wisdom; and Thomas of Aquino, whose name is above all our praise.[2]

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[1] Paradiso, xiii., 13.

Into that bosom, thou believest, whence
Was drawn the rib to form the beauteous cheek,
Whose taste to all the world is costing dear,...
Whate'er of light it has to human nature
Been lawful to possess, was all infused.

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 62.—Dante, in the Paradiso, xxvi., 42-44, supposes the natural origin of language and the extinction of the primitive tongue. On the contrary, in the book, *de Vulgari Eloquentia*, he presumes that the first language was created with man, and that that language was Hebrew, lib. i., 3-5.

[2] Paradiso, xxvi., 45. *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, lib. i, 4.

2. Providence has not done less for the realm of justice than for that of truth. Law is one of the forms of Good; and as Good dwells in God Himself, and God wills above all else the permanence of His own being, He wills law. Now, since all that is

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[1] Paradiso, xiii., 14.

[2] Paradiso, x., 34-45; xii., 43-47.

willed by Him is one thing with His will, we must conclude that Law, in its essence, is the divine will. In its temporal realization here below, Law is the conformity of contingent facts with His Immutable will. In fine, if we take the word in its most restricted signification, Law is the sum of the relations real (*of property*) and personal, of man to man, on the observance of which social order depends.[1]

Man, in fact, has been placed on the confines of two worlds, as the horizon which separates two hemispheres: the world of corruptible beings, and the world of incorruptibility.[2] Coördinated in a necessary relation to these two worlds, he has a twofold mission. One is, to realize the entire sum of well-being possible in this life; this end is reached by the accomplishing of the precepts of philosophy, by the practice of intellectual and moral virtues. The other is, to attain to eternal beatitude, and this is accomplished by a docile adhesion to the teachings of revelation, by the exercise of the theological virtues.[3] However, this admirable economy would soon be disturbed by rebellious passions, if these were not restrained by a judicious curb, and directed by a guiding hand, if their impulses were not modified by exterior circumstances; the curb is Law; the hand, authority; the exterior circumstances, society. To the two missions of man correspond two kinds of law, of authority, of society; the one temporal, and the other spiritual; the organization of these two spheres will be more nearly considered.[1]

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[1] *De Monarchia*, ii.—Cf. St. Thomas, 1a, 2æ, q. 91, 1.

[2] *De Monarchia*, iii.—Cf. *de Causis*, 2.—St. Bonaventura, *Serm.* 1, *in Hexamer.*

[3] *De Monarchia*, iii.

The unity of the human race is a fact placed by all beliefs, ancient or modern, beyond the domain of controversy.[2] Hence, there is for the human race but one single and common terrestrial destination, which is the same as that of each man in particular. This destination is, to reduce to *act* the whole power of intelligence with which he is endowed, proposing to himself speculation as his principal, and practice as his secondary object. Such is the all important purpose of civilization entire.[3] From another point of view, if man is essentially social, if the need of living in society groups individuals into families, families into cities, and cities into nations, the same need draws together the nations among themselves. This drawing together, left to the ambition of princes and the caprices of fortune, becomes collision: this is the origin of war; and war implies both the absence and the importance of some legal order that may peacefully unite the nations to make of them one universal society.[1] The inevitable form of a society thus conceived, will be unity; for unity is to our minds the primal constituent of the divine essence in the image of which human nature was made; it is the law that presides over the government of the world; it is the condition of existence, of perfection, of harmony; for again, one single will must govern, in order to effect unanimity and consequently peace and concord among those who obey. Raised to a degree of power which should leave no place for desires or for passions, this single will would be constrained to be just, and in turn, would constrain all who might show themselves perverse. The rivalries between princes and peoples would disappear, a general security would be established, under favor of which the intellectual and moral activity of minds would be developed. These inductions of reasoning, confirmed by the authority of the learning of antiquity, by Homer and by Aristotle, are still farther supported by the testimony of Holy Writ. Is not this enough to lead to the conclusion that a universal monarchy, that is, the dominion of one over men and things in the order of time, is necessary to the well-being of the world?[1]

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[1] *De Monarchia*, iii.—Purgatorio, xvi., 32.

> Hence it behoved laws for a rein to place,
> Behoved a king to have, who at the least
> Of the true city should discern the tower.
> The laws exist, but who sets hand to them?

Convito, iv. 9.—Cf. St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 95, 1.

[2] Convito, iv., 15.

[3] *De Monarchia*, 1.

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[1] Paradiso, viii., 40.

......Would it be worse,
For men on earth were they not citizens.

Convito, iv., 4.—Cf. Aristot., Politics, i., 2.

But who will be the head of this monarchy, and who can claim the right of imposing it upon men? By recognizing Law as the divine will, and the invisible thoughts of God as translated into visible characters in His works, we have only to look through history to find signs of the providential vocation which led a privileged race to the empire of the world.[2] Marvellous signs are met with in the history of the Roman people; for it is with peoples as with men, some are born slaves and others kings. If power pertains to nobility, and if nobility in its origin is interchangeable with heroism, what people was more heroic and could more truly boast a series of the most virile virtues, from Torquatus, Cincinnatus, Decius, and Camillus, down to Scipio, Cato, and Pompey? If uprightness of intentions, solemnity of declaration, moderation in victory, and wisdom in government, can legitimate conquests, where can these conditions be more gloriously found? If prodigies be required, occurrences of that sort are not lacking in the annals of the city for whose sake bucklers rained down from heaven, and birds watched while its proper defenders slept. If there be a judgment of God in the result of competitions and combats, Rome struggled for the empire of the nations with Assyria, Egypt, Persia, and Greece; she left them all behind her: she fought, as if in a judicial duel, against Carthage, Spain, Gaul, and Germany, and she bore away the honors of the field. Finally, if a yet more august sanction be requisite, He who was the expectation of the earth, and who Himself waited to appear until the earth should be ready for Him, He who came to offer a legitimate satisfaction for the iniquities of all time, and who could accomplish this only by undergoing a legal chastisement, the Son of God, came at the moment when the world was resting in a general submission to the Roman power. He accepted the condemnation, the authority, of a Roman judge, delegated by a Cæsar. As one Cæsar was the minister of divine retribution on the person of the Man-God, so was another Cæsar to be the instrument of that which was to descend upon the deicide people.[1] From Cæsar to

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[1] Convito, iv., 4.—*De Monarchia*, lib. i., entire.—St. Thomas, *de Regim. Princip.*, lib. i., cap. i., 2.

[2] *De Monarchia*, lib. ii., *in princ.*—Convito, iv., 4.

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[1] Paradiso, vi., 12-32.

Behold how great a power has made it worthy
  Of reverence, beginning from the hour
  When Pallas died to give it sovereignty....
Torquatus thence and Quinctius, who from locks
  Unkempt was named, Decii and Fabii,
  Received the fame I willingly embalm....

Cæsar the sovereign vocation was to descend to Constantine, and from Justinian to pass over to Charlemagne: universal monarchy, regenerated by Christianity, receiving with a new name a new existence, was to become the Holy Roman Empire.[1]

Now, the Holy-Empire, founded for the temporal well-being of men, having its reason for existence in the necessities of social life, which in turn find their reason in the corresponding laws of physical nature, thus goes back, without intermediary, to the very Author of nature. It has its place in the plan of creation, it has been realized through a series of providential events, it holds from God alone.[2]

......The living Justice that inspires me
Granted it......
The glory of doing vengeance for its wrath....
Later it ran with Titus to do vengeance
Upon the vengeance of the ancient sin.

Convito, iv., 4. *Ibid.*, cap. v.—*De Monarchia*, lib. ii., entire.—Cf. St. Thomas, *de Regim. Princip.*, iii., 4, and following.

[1] Paradiso, vi., 1-4; 31.

And when the tooth of Lombardy had bitten
The Holy Church, then underneath its wings
Did Charlemagne victorious succor her.

[2] *De Monarchia*, lib. iii. And since the disposition of this world follows the disposition of the celestial spheres, it is necessary in order that the salutary instructions of liberty and peace may be suitably adopted to times and places, that this terrestrial ruler be inspired by Him, who directly beholds the entire disposition of the heavens. This can only be He who ordained that disposition... And if this be so, God alone elects, God alone confirms.

And yet, monarchical authority, even while thus independent, has its limitations. The social order exists only in the interest of the human race: they who obey the law were not created for the good pleasure of the lawgiver: on the contrary, the lawgiver was made for their needs. It is an incontestable axiom that the monarch is to be considered as the servant of all.[1] Hence power in public affairs ceases to be at the service of a small number of men, of such namely as claim superiority under title of nobility. It is this very title which must now be examined. Nobility, if we heed the opinion of its scions, consists in descent from a long series of opulent ancestors. But we can recognize no rights conferred by riches, which may be triply despicable, through the miseries attached to their possession, the dangers attending their increase, and the iniquity of their origin. This iniquity becomes manifest, whether the said riches are the result of blind chance or of culpable trickery, whether they proceed from selfish labors wherefrom every generous thought has been excluded, or whether they have been transmitted in the ordinary course of succession. For the order of legal succession is by no means identical with the legitimate order of reason, which would call to the inheritance of the property of the deceased only the heir of his virtues.[1] And again, if the rights of the nobles spring from the long series of generations to which they can point, reason and faith re-conduct all generations to the feet of a first father, and, either all generations were ennobled in his person, or, in that person were stricken by a perpetual plebeianism. Thus the existence of a hereditary nobility pre-supposes the inequality, the primitive multiplicity, of the races of men, and hence aims a blow at Christian doctrine.[2] True nobility, for every being, is that perfection, within the limits of its nature, to which it may attain: for man in particular, it is the sum of felicitous dispositions of which the germs have been planted in his nature by the hand of God—which germs, cultivated by a persevering will, become ornaments, talents, virtues.[3] He from whom they emanate varies them according to the diversity of functions needful for social life: to some he gives words for counselling, to others the energy to issue commands, and again to others the unquestioning courage required to execute such commands: thence, inequality among men. God then implants within us such qualities as may please Him, employing, as means, celestial influences—such influences acting under His hand as a seal to stamp the wax of our nature. These influences which, making no distinctions, visit houses illustrious or obscure, correct the effect of the laws of generation, which otherwise would cause children to present the exact image of their father; they interrupt the succession of characters in families; they ought also to interrupt the claim to succession in regard to public honors.[1] It was necessary that man should not find within himself hereditary merits, in order that he might seek to make for himself new ones by labor, and that by prayer he might ask for them.[2] Functions therefore ought to be personal, as are vocations: nature and fortune, so often contradictory in their gifts, ought to be set in accord. The prosperity of the world depends on the proper solution of this problem. [1] We cannot deny the continuance of the same virtues in a small number of illustrious families. But then it is the collective sum of the virtues of each one that makes the glory of all. Nobility is like a mantle, which the shears of time would speedily shorten, did not each generation add something to its length.[2]

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[1] *De Monarchia*, ii. Secundem legem viventes non ad legislatorem, ordinantur, sed magis ille ad hos... Monarcha minister omnium procul dubio habendus est. Cf. St. Thomas, prima, secundæ, q. 96, 4.

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[1] Convito, Canzone 3, lib. iv.—*Ibid.* iv., 11, 12, 13. "Might it have pleased God....that he who does not inherit the excellence, should lose the inheritance of the property!".... Cf. on Riches, Cicero, Paradox., 1. —Boethius, lib. ii., metr. 2, 5.

[2] Convito, iv., 14, 15. Cf. St. Thomas, *De Erudit. Princip.*, i., 4.—St. Bonaventura, *Serm.* iii., *Domin.* 12, *post Penteeost.*; *Serm.* i., *de S. Martino.*

[3] Convito, iv., 16, 19, 20. *De Monarchia*, ii.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *loc. cit.*

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[1] Paradiso, viii., 40.

And can they be so, if below they live not
  Diversely unto offices diverse?
  No, if your master writeth well for you.
  ......Therefore it behoves
  The roots of your effects to be diverse.
Hence one is Solon born, another Xerxes.

Cf. Aristot., Politics, i., 5, 6.

[2] Purgatorio, vii., 41.

Temporal society conceived in this way cannot be completely realized here below. But the poet finds the type of his conceptions in a better world than this. Heaven lies open before him; he contemplates the souls of the just who had previously occupied destructible thrones, now gathered together in a royalty without end. He sees them forming of their glories, grouped together, these words, written in letters of fire, as the fundamental law of political communities: *Diligite justitiam, qui judicatis terram.* Then the letter M remains alone, crowned with a flaming aureole, the initial and the symbol of monarchy. A last transformation displays, in place of the M, the eagle, the bird of God, the emblem of the Holy Roman Empire.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, viii., 47.

Evermore nature, if it fortune find
Discordant to it, like each other seed,
Out of its region, maketh evil thrift, etc.

Convito, iv., 11.

[2] Convito, iv., 29.—Paradiso, xvi., 3.

Truly thou art a cloak that quickly shortens,
So that unless we piece thee day by day,
Time goeth round about thee with his shears.

Parallel with universal monarchy, by means of which all terrestrial interests may be regulated, rises the universal Church, through which the religious destinies of mankind are to be accomplished. The Church can pretend to no suzerainty over the Empire; she had no part in its establishment, and no legal title authorizes her to require its homage. She cannot make to herself a kingdom of this world without running counter to her very constitution and acting in a manner contrary to the example of Christ, which is the immutable type of her conduct.

Another and a worthier empire belongs to her, that of eternity; she is the depositary of the divine teachings, which surpass all the works of reason; she is enriched by the graces which cause the germination of virtues beyond the sphere of nature: Catholic, she embraces more nations than any secular society ever joined together. She too is monarchical; for amid so great a multitude and variety of men, harmony would be constantly disturbed by the impetuosity of human wills, were it not for the guiding and moderating intervention of the sovereign Pontiff.[1] It was to prepare a seat for this necessary pontificate that God set His own hand to the foundation of Rome and of the Roman power.[2] This is why the city of Romulus was made a holy place, why the stones of its walls are worthy of respect, and the ground upon which it stands is worthy of more honor than men can well speak.[3] It was above the horizon of the seven hills that, in the lapse of many centuries, the two suns arose: the imperial sun, enlightening the way of this life, and the sun of the papacy, illuminating the way leading to heaven. We have seen these two stars, quitting their proper orbits, clash one against the other, and we have thought them eclipsed.[1] We have witnessed the struggles awaiting the soldiers of Christ in this world, and the disorder introduced into their ranks, notwithstanding the efforts made by their eternal Head to rally them around Himself.[2] The city of God cannot then expect to reach its complete realization under the laws of time. The true Rome, says the poet, is the Rome of which Christ is a Roman; the typical society is that of which Christ is the visible Superior. He who would comprehend the vicissitudes of the Church in its present struggles, must previously consider it in its triumph.[3]

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[1] Paradiso, xviii., 30-37.

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[1] *De Monarchia*, iii. ....“ These two beatitudes....we reach by different means....nevertheless, human cupidity would set them aside, were not men, like horses, restrained in their vagabond brutishness by some bridle. Whence it was necessary for man to have two directions, in accordance with the two ends proposed ; that of the supreme Pontiff, who should in accordance with Revelation, direct the generations of men to spiritual felicity ; and that of the emperor, who, in accordance with the teachings of philosophy, should direct men to temporal felicity.”

Paradiso, v., 26.

Ye have the Old and the New Testament,
And the Pastor of the Church who guideth you,
Let this suffice you unto your salvation.

St. Thomas 1a, 2æ, q. 112. 2.

[2] Inferno, ii., 8.

The which and what, wishing to speak the truth
Were ’stablished as the holy place, wherein
Sits the successor of the greatest Peter.

[3] Convito, iv., 5. “ Hence we can ask no more to enable us to see what a special birth, a special process thought out and ordained by God, was that of the holy city. And certainly I am of settled opinion that the stones standing in its walls are worthy of reverence, and that the soil whereon it is seated is worthy beyond all that has been predicated and proved.”

III.

1. Beyond the celestial spheres wherein the stars revolve, be-

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[1] Purgatorio, xvi., 36.

> Rome, that reformed the world, accustomed was
> Two suns to have, which one road and the other,
> Of God and of the world, made manifest.
> One has the other quenched.....

[2] Paradiso, xii., 13.

[3] Purgatorio, xxxii., 34.

> ....That Rome where Christ is Roman.

Ibid., xxvi., 42.

> ......The cloister
> Wherein is Christ the abbot of the college.

yond the ninth heaven, which envelops the others within its vast vortex, is found the empyrean heaven, pure light, intellectual light filled with love, love of the true good, source of all joy, joy which transcends all imaginable delights.[1] This place is the common abode of souls purified by the trials of this life or by the expiations which follow it. If we sometimes imagine them placed at unequal heights among the innumerable orbs that throng the firmament, this image, which takes its measure from the weakness of the human mind, has no other object than to make us understand the inequality of their rewards as proportioned to the inequality of their merits. They themselves feel the justice of this proportionment, and the knowledge which they possess of it becomes a constituent element of their felicity. For the love that renders them happy makes their wills enter into the circle of the divine will, where they lose themselves as in an ocean. Thus, under differing conditions, each soul finds the term of its desires, that is, the sum of all the happiness of which it is capable; from the very diversity of the benefits received, results an admirable concert in praise of the Remunerator.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, xxx., 13.

......The heaven that is pure light,
Light intellectual replete with love,
Love of true good replete with ecstasy,
Ecstasy that transcendeth every sweetness.

2. According to the law prevailing in the three kingdoms of the invisible world by which the temporary absence of the body is made good, the blessed souls are clad in sensible forms. These forms shine with a marvellous brightness, always proportioned to the greatness of the virtues which it crowns. The first are merely veils of light; then come glowing flames, incandescent stars; all that is material has become spiritualized, so to speak: we may not call these, shades, but glories, lives, loves.[2] Here, in fact, the organs have ceased to be the necessary servants of the intelligence; thought is interchanged without the aid of lan-

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[1] Paradiso, iv., 13; iii., 24.

"Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
Of charity, that makes us wish alone
For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.
If to be more exalted we aspired,
Discordant would our aspirations be
Unto the will of Him who here secludes us; ....
Nay, 'tis essential to this blest existence
To keep itself within the will divine,
Whereby our very wishes are made one :...
And his will is our peace; this is the sea
To which is moving onward whatsoever
It doth create, and all that nature makes."
Then it was clear to me how everywhere
In heaven is Paradise, although the grace
Of good supreme there rain not in one measure.

Convito, iii., 15.—Paradiso, vi., 39, 41.

[2] Paradiso, iii., 8; v., 36; viii., 7; x., xxi., etc., *passim.*

guage; it no longer knows the obstacles placed by time and space in the way of its explorations; the future is for it like unto the past: it can thus, without hindrance, bend itself down from the heights of heaven to the lowly globe on which it once dwelt.[1] Hence, the memories of the earth, and above all, the holy affections there formed, are not effaced in the souls that have left it for a better home. They cast down upon us compassionate glances, they serve as interpreters and intercessors with the Almighty, who in turn makes them His ministers. They are channels by means of which prayer may ascend, and grace may descend.[2]

But these are, so to speak, the accessory circumstances of beatitude; we must penetrate into its very essence. If beatitude supposes the impossibility of the existence of any ulterior desire, it is attainable by the human being only in the complete perfection and satisfaction of his human faculties. Now, of these faculties, reason is that which rules over all the rest; reason can be satisfied only in the contemplation of truth, and all truth reposes within the Divine mind. Hence, beatitude consists in the vision of God.[1] It is there, in that boundless mirror, that the elect perceive, in one single and unchangeable perspective, all that has been, is, or is to be, even the first conception and desire, before the word that manifests and the deed that realizes. Their sight penetrates to greater depths in proportion as they merit more.[2] The act by which they see, is then the basis, and, as it were, the matter of their felicity; the act by which they love, is its form: the eternal decrees, as they make themselves known, are accepted and accomplished.[3] As intuition pertains to the understanding, delectation pertains to the will; thus beatitude (knowledge and love) is the state of man raised to its highest power. From another point of view, beatitude is God Himself giving Himself to be possessed. Man and God, the subject and the object, touch one another, but are not confounded together; the finite subsists distinct in the presence of the infinite.

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[1] Paradiso, xv., 19, 31. St. Thomas, *prima*, q. 89, 7, 8.—St. Gregory, *Moral.*, xii., 13.

[2] Paradiso, xiv., 22. Intercession of the Saints, xxi., 21.

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[1] Paradiso, xxviii., 36.

From this it may be seen how blessedness
Is founded in the faculty which sees,
And not in that which loves, and follows next;
And of this seeing merit is the measure.

Convito, iii., 15. *Epist dedic. ad Can. Grand in fine.*—Cf. St. Thomas, 1a, 2æ, q. 3, 4.

[2] Vision in God, Paradiso, viii., 31; ix., 21, 25; xi., 7; xv., 21; xxi., 30; xxix., 3.—Knowledge of the future, *passim*, but especially xvii., 5:

....Even as minds terrestrial perceive
No triangle containeth two obtuse,
So thou beholdest the contingent things
Ere in themselves they are, fixing thine eyes
Upon the point in which all times are present.

Cf. Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis.*

[3] Paradiso, iii., 27. See above.

3. But a day is to come when the blissful uniformity of the existence of the saints will experience a change. On that day, they will retake their clothing of flesh, glorified. Their person, thus re-established in its primitive integrity, will be more agreeable to the Creator: in return, He will measure out to them His graces in still greater abundance. The clearness of their vision will thence be heightened, while the interior glow which that clearness maintains, will increase, as will also the exterior irradiation which must be its necessary consequence. As the incandescent coal in the flame, so will the resuscitated bodies appear within their aureoles.[1] Then, the guests invited to the banquet

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[1] Paradiso, xiv., 15.

When, glorious and sanctified, our flesh
  Is reassumed, then shall our persons be
  More pleasing by their being all complete;
For will increase what e'er bestows on us
  Of light gratuitous the Good Supreme,
  Light which enables us to look on Him;
Therefore the vision must perforce increase,
  Increase the ardor which from that is kindled,
  Increase the radiance which from this proceeds.

Cf. St. Augustine, *de Civ. Dei*.—St. Thomas, *Contr. Gent.*, iv., 79.—St. Bonaventura, *Compend.*, vii., 28, 29.

of eternal life having taken their places, that festival will begin which knows no morrow.

To depict this festival, the poet has gathered together the most lovely and ravishing colors. He sees in the midst of the Empyrean a vast reservoir of light, extending in a circular form, and reflecting the splendors of the divine glory; around, rise, as in an amphitheatre, shining thrones, whereon are seated, clad in white garments, the teeming ranks of the blessed. This assemblage is comparable to a white rose whose innumerable leaves lie open: joy and praise are the perfumes rising from its corolla. Angels with golden wings, like swarms of bees, descend within the bosom of the glorious flower, and then ascend toward the Eternal Sun, the rays from which their multitude in no way intercepts. He alone, in fact, satisfies and holds fast the contemplations and affections of these myriads of spirits, an Orb never veiled by any cloud, with no setting and no winter-time, untouched by the laws of creation established by Himself.[1]

IV.

1. In accompanying human nature to heights where it thus

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[1] Paradiso, xxx., 33; xxxi., *passim.*

O splendor of God! by means of which I saw
  The lofty triumph of the realm veracious,
  Give me the power to say how it I saw!
There is a light above, etc.

becomes transfigured, we are led to recognize the existence of natures of a higher order; if we admit that the works of God cannot be surpassed in magnificence by the imagination of man, it is enough to be able to conceive of possible myriads of spiritual creatures in order to conclude that they really are.[1] Thus their existence and their functions have been divined by men in all ages, although imperfectly demonstrated, as the light of day makes its presence felt in eyes that are still closed. The pagans called them Gods; Plato named them Ideas; in the ordinary language of Christians they are the Angels: philosophers prefer to call them Intelligences.[2] Faith has rent the veil separating us from these excellent creatures. Distributed through the universe, with which they came into being because they were to maintain in it order and life, their number is as great as is their perfection.[3] Their understanding, fixed in the constant vision of the truth, does not know the alternations of forgetfulness and remembrance which are our portion. The illuminating grace merited by their fidelity in the day of temptation, forever confirms their will (which never ceases to be free) in the habit of justice.[1] In them, power is not distinguished from act; pure act constitutes their mode of being; they are intelligence, they are love.[2] Nevertheless, unequal among themselves, they are divided into three hierarchies, of which each one is subdivided into three orders. To each hierarchy is attributed the special contemplation of one of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; to each order a different point of view; each Divine Person being capable of being considered in Itself, or in its relations to the two Others.[1] To these contemplative functions corresponds an active ministry. The nine choirs of angels (for this number nine, the square of three, has a mysterious signification)[2] are the motors of the nine heavenly spheres: they communicate to them a swiftness proportioned to the fervor which has been enkindled within themselves: by this means they intervene in all the phenomena of the physical world.[3] But their action is by preference exerted in the moral world. From them spring, and upon the model of their hierarchy are constructed, the nine degrees of the human sciences.[4] Through their care the seeds of virtue are deposited and developed in souls. If in the joys of Paradise they are confounded with the blessed, in Purgatory they show themselves as judges, guardians, consolers of the suffering just.

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[1] Convito, ii., 5.

[2] Convito, ii., 5: "Plato calls them ideas, which is as much as to say universal forms and natures."—Cf. Brucker, *Hist. critic.*, *in Platone.*

[3] Paradiso, xxix., 13, 44.—Cf. St. Dionysius the Areopagite, *de Cœlesti Hierarch.*, xiv.

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[1] Paradiso, xxix., 20-26.

On which account their vision was exalted
By the enlightening grace and their own merit,
So that they have a full and steadfast will....
These substances, since in God's countenance
They jocund were, turned not away their sight
From that wherefrom not anything is hidden;
Hence they have not their vision intercepted
By object new, and hence they do not need
To recollect, through interrupted thought.

Paradiso, xxi., 30.

....Love unfettered in this court sufficeth
To follow the eternal Providence.

Cf. S. Dionys. Areop., *de Divin. Nomin.*, iv.

[2] Paradiso, xxix., 11.

......And summit of the world
Were those wherein the pure act was produced.

Paradiso, xxiii., 35.

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[1] Paradiso, xxviii., 9-32. Convito, ii., 6. Cf. St. Dionys., *de Cœlesti Hierach.* vi., ix.—St. Thomas, prima, q. 108.

[2] *Vita Nuova*, passim. Dante finds this number appearing in the most soul-stirring circumstances of his youth: nine years and eighteen, were the two epochs which brought him near to Beatrice: when he lost her, he was close upon his twenty-seventh year.—Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Erudit, didascal.*, ii., 5.

[3] Paradiso, ii., 42; viii., 13, 29; ix., 21, etc. Convito, ii., 5.—Cf. Plato, Epinomis, Timæus.—St. Thomas, q. 110, art. 1.

[4] Convito, ii., 14, 15.—Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Serm.* xxii., in *Hexamer.*

Their formidable appearance when sent to chastise the insolence of the demons, illumines the darkness of Hell. They encounter the same enemies, and combat them with more equal chances, on the earth, where the salvation or the loss of souls makes the subject-matter in dispute.[1] Even the passing interests of life are not left to accident, as we in our ignorance presume. He who created spirits to move the heavens, and to make an equal light shine upon every part of the globe, also established an intelligence that should dispense temporal glories, and arrange that, in spite of human precautions and foresight, the goods of this world should pass from family to family, and from nation to nation. This intelligence provides judges, and governs with the same wisdom as do the other spirits, her compeers; as happy as they, she turns the sphere confided to her care, and takes pleasure in its motion. She heeds not the blasphemies of those who ought to praise her, and who malign her under the name of Fortune.[2] Thus, every place and every being, even all the circumstances of their existence, life and death, all things, have their angels, representatives of the divine omnipresence.

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[1] Paradiso, xxxi., *Passim*. Purgatorio, viii., 32., ix., 26, and *Passim*.—Inferno, ix., 29.—Purgatorio, v., 36.—Cf. St. Thomas, prima, q. 112.

[2] Inferno, vii., 25-32.

> This is she who is so execrated
>   Even by those who ought to give her praise,
>   Giving her blame amiss, and bad repute.
> But she is blissful, and she heeds it not;
>   Among the other primal creatures gladsome
>   She turns her sphere, and blissful she rejoices.

Cf. Aristot., Physics, ii., 4. Bœthius, i., iv., pros. 7.

2. One step still remains to be taken, and the intellectual pilgrimage nears its end. But that step is an immense one: between the uppermost heights of the finite, and the Infinite, between the loftiest creatures and their Creator, stretches an abyss, to cross which requires not only all the combined powers of reason and faith, but even more.

The worlds that we have traversed show forth the admirable art which called them into being. Even on the gates of Hell we have seen the imprint of power, wisdom, and love. The heavens, revolving over our heads, exhibit to us their endless beauties, as if to invite us to recognize the Worker who fashioned them. The universal movement bearing along the firmament supposes an immovable prime motor acting on matter by the force of moral attraction.[1] Besides, given, the most obscure being in nature, it must have received its existence from some other being; and this latter in turn must exist of itself or through the causation of some other. If it exists of itself it is the First Principle; if not, we must mount still higher, and multiply indefinitely efficient causes, or finally reach some primordial principle, the only being that we can conceive of as necessary, because from it alone, mediately, or immediately, all existences emanate. God then makes Himself known by proofs both physical and mataphysical; He has manifested Himself more fully by pouring forth the celestial dew of inspiration upon prophets, evangelists, and apostles.[1] One in His substance, Power, Wisdom, and Love subsist in Him in a trinity of persons, so that both the singular and the plural, in the language of men, are applicable to Him.[2] He is spirit, He is the indivisible centre whither converge all times and all places.[3] He is the circle which circumscribes the universe, and which nothing circumscribes.[4] Immense, eternal, immutable, He is the primal truth outside of which there is nothing but darkness.[1] In His thought all creatures are to be found foreseen and co-ordinated to their end. Even contingent facts are there reflected in advance, without thereby becoming necessary. Thus, the glance of the spectator on the shore follows the course of the ship on the waters, but does not direct it.[2] He is also unbounded goodness, and, as the sovereign good,[3] He is the invariable object of His own will, which thence becomes the source and the measure of all justice.

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[1] Purgatorio, xiv., 50. Paradiso, i., 25.—Cf. Plato. Laws, x.—Aristot., Metaph., xii.

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[1] Paradiso, xxiv., 45.

* * * * In one God I believe,
Sole and eterne, who moveth all the heavens
With love and with desire, himself unmoved;
And of such faith not only have I proofs
Physical and metaphysical, but gives them
Likewise the truth that from this place rains down....

Epist. ad Can Grand.—Cf. Aristot., Metaph., iii.

[2] Inferno, iii., 2.—Paradiso, xiv. *Ibid.*, xxiv., 47.—Dean Plumptre's Tr.

In whom both *sunt* and *est* combined we note.

[3] Paradiso, xxix., 4.

Where centres every where and every when.

[4] Purgatorio, xi., 1. Paradiso, xiv., 10.

Not circumscribed and all things circumscribing.

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 17.

But this justice has depths beyond the limited reach of our reason, like to the bottom of a sea which the short plummet of the navigator vainly endeavors to sound.[4] Finally, all His attributes, raised to the same degree of sovereign perfection, are maintained in an indestructible equilibrium; so that, borrowing the language of numbers, it is permissible to define God as the Primal Equation.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, iv., 32; xix., 32; xxxiii., 23.—Cf. St. Thomas, *Prima*, q. 16 5.—Aristot., Metaph., xii.

[2] Paradiso, xvii., 13.

Contingency, that outside of the volume
Of your materiality extends not,
Is all depicted in the eternal aspect.
Necessity however thence it takes not,
Except as from the eye, in which 'tis mirrored,
A ship that with the current down descends.

Cf. Bœthius, lib. v., pros. 4, 6.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 31.

[3] Paradiso, xxvi., 6. Convito, iv., 12.—Cf. Plato, Rep., vi.,—St. Thomas, *Prima*, q. 6, 4.

[4] Paradiso, xix., 29.

The primal will, that in itself is good,
Ne'er from itself, the Good Supreme, has moved.
So much is just as is accordant with it.

Inferno, xx., 10.—Paradiso, iv., 23; xix., 20; xxxii., 17.—Convito, iv., 22. Dionys. Areop., *de Div. Nomin.*—St. Thomas, prima, q. 21.

Such a God, sufficing to Himself in the solitude of His essence, would create, not to increase His happiness, but that His glory, shining in His works, might witness of itself to itself.[2] In the bosom of eternity, outside of all time, without other law than His own will, He who is One and Trinal entered into action; Power executed what Wisdom designed, and infinite Love, opening itself out, manifested itself in new loves We may not say that before beginning to create He remained inactive; for the words *before* and *after* are banished from the language of things divine. Form and matter, isolated and combined, were sent forth at the same moment, as a triple arrow from a single bow, out of the depths of the creative thought; and, with the substances, was created the order suitable to them. Such as are pure forms, as the angels, occupied the summit of the created universe; matter occupied the lowest regions; between the two, matter and spiritual form were united by an indissoluble bond.[1] Created things are the splendor of the immutable idea which the Father generates and loves without end: idea, reason, word, light, which, without separating itself from Him who causes it to glow, without quitting its proper unity, shines down from creature to creature, from causes to effects, until at length it occasions merely contingent and passing phenomena: it is an illumination repeated from mirror to mirror, becoming more and more pale as its distance from its Source increases.[2] Thus, there is in everything an ideal and incorruptible element; but in all things that come into being subject to destruction, there is also a gross and perishable element. The matter which is in them exhibits dispositions and undergoes a variety of influences which render it more or less diaphanous to the divine light, and cause it to yield itself more or less faithfully to the seal whose impress it is destined to receive. Thus the impression becomes blurred or mutilated.[1] And this imperfection lies in the nature of things; for He whose compasses described the extremities of the universe, could not have swept a circle wide enough to contain His Word. Nature is too narrow to enclose the infinite good which alone can be its own measure; it could not suffice to realize all the designs of the inexhaustible Artist.[2] Finally, if it is difficult to comprehend the creation of bodies by a God who is pure spirit, we must remember that the effect can be contained eminently in the cause, and that the character of cause, that is, of spontaneous force, belongs only to a spiritual being. In this sense it has been truly said: *Omnis intelligentia plena est formis.*[3]

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[1] Paradiso, xv., 25.

When on you dawned the First Equality.

Cf. Plato, Phædo.

[2] Paradiso, x., 1; vii., 22.

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[1] Paradiso, xxix., 5.

Not to acquire some good unto himself,
  Which is impossible, but that his splendor
  In its resplendency may say, '*Subsisto,*'
In his eternity, outside of time,
  Outside all other limits, as it pleased him,
  Into new Loves the Eternal Love unfolded.
Nor as if torpid did he lie before;
  For neither after nor before proceeded
  The going forth of God upon those waters.

Cf. Plato, Timæus.—St. Thomas, prima, q. 44, 4.

[2] Paradiso, i., 1; xiii., 19. Cary's Tr.

* * * * That which dies not,
And that which can die, are but each the beam
Of that Idea, which our Sovereign Sire
Engendereth loving; for that lively Light,
Which passeth from his splendor, not disjoined
From him, nor from the Love triune with them,
Doth, through his bounty, congregate itself,
Mirrored, as 'twere in new existences,*
Itself unalterable, and ever one,
  Descending hence unto the lowest powers,
Its energy so sinks, at last it makes
But brief contingencies.

Ibid., viii., 35. Longfellow.

And not alone the natures are foreseen
  Within the mind that in itself is perfect,
  But they together with their preservation.

Convito.—Cf. Plato, Parmenid., Rep., vi., vii.—Bœthius, l. iii., metre 9.—St. Thomas, prima, q. 32, 1.

* (Other readings give "*nine* subsistences," the nine heavens.—Tr.)

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[1] Paradiso, xiii., 23.

> Neither their wax, nor that which tempers it,
> Remains immutable, and hence beneath
> The ideal signet more and less shines through.

Convito, iii., 6.—*Epist. ad Can. Grand.*—Cf. Dionys. Areop., *de Cœl. Hierarch.*, iv.

[2] Paradiso, xix., 14.—*Epist. ad Can. Grand.*

[3] Paradiso, xxxiii., 29.—Cf. *de Causis*, 9.

Among these innumerable works, there are few which God regarded with more complacency than man, whose free and immortal soul presented features like unto Himself, and thus solicited His predilection. Sin, by disfiguring this resemblance, degraded man from the rank which he held in the affection of his Creator. There were only two ways of regaining that lost rank: either by a laborious reparation springing from Himself, or by a gratuitous rehabilitation granted to him by God. But it was not possible for man to descend so low by the humility of his obedience, as he had presumed to rise high by the audacity of his revolt; he remained fatally incapable of offering satisfaction. It was then needful that God Himself should act in his favor, either by showing him mercy, or by showing him both mercy and justice. He preferred the second way, whereby He might manifest the union of His infinite perfections: the work is the more dear to the workman as he the more clearly recognizes in it his own handicraft. It was more bountiful in God to deliver Himself up, and, by undergoing the punishment, to give to humanity the power to lift itself, than it would have been to remit the penalty due, without any merit acquired. By the pure act of His boundless love, the Word unites to Himself our infirm, fallen, proscribed nature. This humiliation offered an adequate victim to inflexible justice. From the first day to the last night of the world, never else was seen nor will be seen, the accomplishment of so profound and magnificent a design.[1]

But redemption is completed only by the successive perfecting of the generations which follow one another upon the earth, and by their coronation in glory. This is the object of that especial Providence which is ever incomprehensible, whether it predestines the elect, endows them with unequal gifts, makes evil serve in the triumph of good; or whether, although inexorable in its decrees, it nevertheless allows itself to be touched by prayer and by the merit of virtue,[2] and attracts our intellects and our wills in the design of thus effecting the concentration of all our efforts. For the Alpha is also the Omega: the God who has revealed Himself as the Creator has promised to be the Remunerator: He is the Cause, He will also be the End.[3]

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[1] Paradiso, vii., 38-39.

> Nor 'twixt the first day and the final night
> Such high and such magnificent proceeding
> By one or by the other was or shall be;
> For God more bounteous was himself to give
> To make man able to uplift himself,
> Than if he only of himself had pardoned.

Cf. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, iv., 6.

[2] Paradiso, xx., 45; xxi., 32; xxxii., 22.—Purgatorio, vi., 41.—Paradiso, ix., 36; xx., 33.

[3] Paradiso, i., 3; iv., 42; xxxiii., 16.—Cf. Bœthius, lib. iii., pros. 10.

Here it would seem as if the poet must prove faithless to his systematic method of procedure, whereby each series of conceptions is reflected in a corresponding vision: it would seem as though an image could here only hamper the thought. But genius accepted the challenge; and never, perhaps, either before or since, has poetic expression risen to more perfect purity combined with more daring energy. The heavens opened: a luminous point appeared, which sent forth rays of a brightness beyond all that the eye could sustain. Amid the stars that stud the skies, the one which here below appears to us the most minute would seem equal to the moon if compared with this indivisible point. At about the same distance at which a colored halo is formed around the orb whose rays it reflects, a circle of fire wheeled round this immovable point so rapidly that its swiftness exceeded that of the rotating heavens. Other concentric circles, to the number of nine, surrounded this primal one, always more vast in their dimensions, but less swift in their course, less pure in their brilliancy. Then, as the poet stood in suspense between wonder and doubt, it was said to him: "On that point depend the heavens and the whole of nature." That point was God. In the circles which he perceived to be mutually attracted toward their common centre, he recognized the nine orders of spiritual creatures, who themselves drawn on by love, in turn draw after them the entire universe: these were the angels.[1] Then, when his sight, miraculously strengthened, was enabled to gaze into the point which had at first so dazzled it, he there saw gathered into a single beam, so to speak, and reduced to the state of simple light, everything that is displayed throughout the universe, substance, mode, and accident: these were the typal ideas of creation. Within the same point, but at a still greater depth, three circles were to be seen, equal in circumference, but differing in color; the Second was, as it were, the splendor of the First, and the Third like to a flame emanating from the two others. Thus did the Trinity manifest Itself. The second circle, when closely considered, seemed (without losing its primitive color) to bear depicted upon it a human form, a symbol of the incarnation of the Word.[1] Whilst he was endeavoring to understand this wondrous spectacle, the poet thrilled with the joy of comprehension; he felt himself to have become such that it was impossible for him to turn his eyes from the point wherein was concentred all the bliss to which human wishes can aspire; and his will, sweetly attracted, entered into the harmonious movement of universal order. He became sensible of the work of sanctification within him. All mysteries were unveiled to him by immediate intuition. This was a thinking without effort, consequently without processes of reasoning or employment of memory; it was a state of intelligence which has no name among men; it was a complete participation in that philosophy, the only true one, which is that of saints and angels, which is in God Himself, the infinite love of the infinite wisdom.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, xxviii., 6-14.

A point beheld I, that was raying out
   Light so acute, the sight which it enkindles
   Must close perforce before such great acuteness.
And whatsoever star seems smallest here
   Would seem to be a moon if placed beside it
   As one star with another star is placed.
Perhaps at such a distance as appears
   A halo cincturing the light that paints it,
   When densest is the vapor that sustains it,
Thus distant round the point a circle of fire
   So swiftly whirled, etc.......
   ...." From that point
   Dependent is the heaven and nature all."

—Cf. S. Dionys. Areop., *de Cœlest. Hierarch.*—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 15.—Aristot., Metaph.. xii.

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[1] Paradiso, xxxiii., 29.

I saw that in its depth far down is lying
Bound up with love together in one volume,
What through the universe in leaves is scattered;
Substance, and accident, and their operations,
All interfused together in such wise
That what I speak of is one simple light....
Within the deep and luminous subsistence
Of the High Light appeared to me three circles,
Of threefold color and of one dimension,
And by the second seemed the first reflected
As Iris is by Iris, and the third
Seemed fire that equally from both is breathed....
That circulation, which being thus conceived
Appeared in thee as a reflected light,
When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,
Within itself, of its own very color
Seemed to me painted with our effigy,
Wherefore my sight was all absorbed therein.

Cf. Plato, Timæus, Epinomis.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 25. —St. Thomas, prima, q. 15.

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[1] Paradiso. xxxiii., 49.—Convito, iii., 13.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

DANTE'S PHILOSOPHY CONSIDERED.—ANALOGIES WITH ORIENTAL DOCTRINES.

MAN cannot discern the order which reigns in creation without experiencing something of the delight naturally felt by a son who comes upon indications of his father's presence. The most abstract ideas interest him in that they are related to other branches of knowledge leading to God; for in us, interest is mainly the consciousness of relations. Even the productions of the human mind have little or no value in our eyes unless, as they lie side by side in our memories, they have some bond of union among themselves. A system without analogies would be a system without value. But, far from such a condition of things being the actual fact, in regard to philosophical systems all the conceptions of philosophers are overtopped by a certain number of main problems, to which there can be but a certain number of solutions or answers; these answers, necessarily repeated, become rallying points, around which thinkers in all ages have ranged themselves as belonging to divers schools; they are indeed so many characteristic marks, serving to classify each doctrine, which marks must be recognized in order that the doctrine may be duly defined. Besides, every doctrinal teaching inevitably takes account of the labors of previous ages, such labors serving as premises; consequences are drawn from these which will in turn be premises for times to come; and this it is that gives to such teaching its rank as effect and as cause, and confers upon it historical importance. Finally, while a doctrine thus places itself, under the head of filiation and of paternity, in some one of the great families of ideas which we find recorded in history (now as rivals, now as allies, but always living), it shares in the portion of truth which is in them and which gives them life: hence it is not difficult to penetrate to the very essence of the doctrine that we may discover whatsoever of true it really embraces. Thus, when we have compared the philosophy of Dante with that prevailing in the illustrious schools of the East and of Greece, of the Middle Ages and of modern days, we shall have classified it by comparing it with known types; we shall have established what it borrowed and what it transmitted, its origin and its tendency: we may then easily pronounce upon the justness of its maxims, as we find them belonging to systems that have been already judged. This appreciation, historical as to its form, will then be fundamentally a criticism; the point of right and the point of fact will be blended together. They will end by becoming one, indivisible to our eyes when we shall have reached the final question, that of orthodoxy; at that stage, the philosophy of Dante being measured by an infallible rule, its legitimacy (so far as we are concerned) must depend upon its conformity with that rule.

1. Two ways were open, one at the south and one at the north, either of which might have led Dante to the fountains of the time-honored Orient: these were the then frequent relations of Europe with the Saracens and the Mongols. We have already seen how, amid the struggle that occurred between Christianity and Islamism in Spain and in Palestine, the sciences, placed under hospitable protection, passed from one camp to the other, giving rise to an active correspondence, which, from Bagdad and Cordova, extended into all Catholic countries and especially into Italy. Translations of Avicenna, of Algazel, of Averroës, circulating through all hands, could not have failed to fall into those of Dante; repeated quotations found in his writings confirm this conviction.[1] An exact acquaintance with Mussulman doctrines may be perceived in the judgment that he pronounces upon them. While the greater number of his contemporaries held the disciples of the Koran to be pagans, and regarded *Mahom* as an idol, he regards Islamism as an Arian sect, and Mahomet as the leader of

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[1] Convito, ii., 14.—Avicenna, *de Intellig.*, iv.; Algazel, *Logic. et Phil.*, i., 4.
Ibid., iii., 4.—Avicenna, *de Anima*, iii., 3.
Ibid., iv., 13.—Averroës, *in Aristot.*, *de Anima*, iii.
Ibid., iv., 21.—Avicenna, *de Anima*, *Aphorism.*, 38; Algazel, ii., 5.
Ibid., iii., 2, 6, 7; iv., 21, etc. *Epist. ad Can. Grand.*—*Lib. de Causis.*

the greatest schism that ever desolated the Church, the said schism having been in its turn chastised by the divisions existing among its followers, under the mutually inimical standards of Omar and of Ali.[1] Now, these same Saracens, the latest heirs of Alexandrian syncretism, and also initiated into the mysteries of Persian Sufism, thus touched upon two sides the antique Indian wisdom, which seems to have sent forth productive offshoots into Persia and Egypt. It was also found with its fundamental dogmas in the religion of Buddha, which, banished (after bloody struggles) from the Peninsula of Hindostan, invaded northern Asia, and brought under its influence the Mongolian hordes scattered between the Altaï and the Caucasus. These people being set in motion, formidable irruptions (toward the middle of the thirteenth century) desolated the Sclavonic and Germanic countries. Later, the wise policy of the Holy See arrested their progress, and peaceful relations were established between Christian princes and the grandsons of Ghengis-khan. Buddhist ambassadors appeared in the capital and at the general assembly of Catholicity, at Rome and at the second Council of Lyons: in return, Rome and France sent to their new allies missionaries charged with bearing to them faith as well as peace. Industry also had its venturous missions. The ways traced out by John de Plano Carpini and De Ruysbrœck were followed by Venetian merchants; numerous accounts of travels, written or verbal, were circulated; and in that age, more busied than is our own with the interests of the future life, the theological opinions of the Mongols would certainly not remain unknown to the curiosity of European men of learning. Dante especially, eager to know, always in search of traditions and doctrines which might find a place in the cumulation of his vast poetic composition—he who, besides, must more than once have met with Tartar envoys at the courts of princes, could not have failed to enquire into their beliefs. He refers to them, and cites them as witnesses to his own assertions.[1] A twofold means of communication thus placed him, unknown to himself, in connection with the sacerdotal philosophers dwelling on the banks of the Ganges. If we call to mind the fact that their learning, so vaunted throughout antiquity, had several times been consulted by the wise men of Greece, and that it had left traces even in the writings of some of the Fathers of the Church, we may therein perceive a third method of communication.

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[1] Inferno, xxviii., 11; *Ibid.*, xvii., 6. Allusion to the commerce of Europe with the Turks.

Convito, ii., 9. The beliefs of the Saracens quoted as witnessing to the immortality of the soul.

2. At the outset, some remarkable analogies are met with between Indian opinions and those of the Florentine poet regarding

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[1] Allusion to the industry of the Tartars, Inferno, xvii., 6.—Their belief in the immortality of the soul, Convito, ii., 9.

the external figure of the earth and the mysteries hidden in its innermost parts. The Brahmans represent Mt. Meru as the pivotal point of the world: from its foot ray forth all the countries inhabited by men and by genii: on its summit is situated the terrestrial dwelling-place of the gods. The mountain of Purgatory, as described in the Divine Comedy, was the centre of the continent primarily destined to be the abode of mankind; it is crowned by the delightful shades of the terrestrial Paradise.[1] The sombre empire of Yama, like the realm of Satan, is hollowed out in subterranean depths, composed of several circles, which descend, one below another, into interminable abysses. The number of these circles, as variously reported by mythologists, is often nine, or some multiple of nine. The punishments there met with are similar, and are portioned out to like crimes: darkness, fiery sands, seas of blood into which tyrants are plunged, burning regions succeeded by areas of ice.[2]

In addition to these points of superficial resemblance, still closer relations may be found. Such is the peculiar opinion of Dante, according to which, souls detached by death from the bodies in which they dwelt are invested with aerial bodies. This hypothesis, borrowed from Paganism, and variously renewed in Christian philosophy, is nowhere found with more complete developments and more constant features of resemblance than in the systems of India. "If the soul," we are there told, "has practised virtue and has rarely fallen into vice, clothed in a body borrowed from the five elements, it enjoys the delights of Paradise. But, if it has often given itself over to vice, and but rarely to virtue, it takes another body, in the formation of which the five subtile elements concur, and the said body is destined to the tortures of hell. When the souls have tasted of the joys or have undergone the pains due to them, the elementary particles separate, and re-enter the elements from which they had been taken." [1]

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[1] B. Bergmann, *Esquisses du systeme religieux des Mongols*, in his *Voyage chez les Kalmouks.*—Guigniaut, Symboliq., t. i.—Dante, Purgatorio, *passim.*

[2] B. Bergmann, *Voyage chez les Kalmouks*, and *Lois de Manou*, l., iv., sl. 87; xii., sl. 40, 76.—Dante, Inferno, *passim.*

At other times we find the Christian poet dealing with oriental ideas, but in the way of disagreement and controversy. Thus, one of the most serious errors of the Brahmanical theology, one which savors strongly of pantheism, is that which supposes in man the existence of two distinct souls; one, individual, constituting the personality of each person, but restricted to the knowledge of facts and of individual things; the other, a soul by means of which a knowledge of universal truths may be acquired, the immutable reason, the soul of the world, God Himself. Whence it follows, that the aim of science being unceasingly to lead back the particular to the general, is also to blend the individual soul with the infinite soul, and to lose the personality of man in the divine immensity. This theory, reproduced by Averroës, made considerable noise amid scholastic controversies; it was one of the seeds of corruption which the anti-Christian school of Frederic II. had been active in gathering and sowing broadcast. It had attracted the especial solicitude of Catholic doctors; Dante joined in their attacks upon it, and in maintaining the unity, the indivisibility, and consequently the dignity, of the human mind.[1]

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[1] *Lois de Manou*, xii., 16-21.- Dante, Purgatorio, xxv., 27. Convito, ii., 9.

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[1] *Lois de Manou*, vi., 65; xii., 14-18.—Let the wise man reflect, with the closest application of his mind, upon the subtile and indestructible essence of the Supreme Soul, and on its existence within the bodies of beings the loftiest and the lowliest. From the substance of the Supreme Soul escape, as sparks from fire, innumerable vital principles, which ceaselessly communicate motion to creatures ...etc. Colebrooke, *Essai sur la philosophie des Hindous*, Pauthier's translation, p. 56. *Upnek-hat*, *passim*. The individual soul is named *Djiv-alma*; the universal soul, *Param alma* (roots, *Djiv*, to live; *Para*, sovereign). The dangerous nature of the pantheistic doctrine, scattered abroad throughout Christendom with the writings of Averroës, aroused the zeal of the doctors; the activity of this discussion may be seen in the numerous treatises of the time *contra Averrhoistas*, especially in those of Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas. Dante could not fail to take part in so widely spread a controversy: in the twenty-fifth canto of the Purgatorio, we find the Christian thesis against the Averroïsts in its turn presented.

But the two schools of thought which we have just seen in collision again, under more favorable circumstances, approach one another, and the result is the more striking that in this case the intermediate steps do not appear. We have seen that Evil and Good, isolated or in conflict, formed the three great categories wherein were co-ordinated the conceptions of Dante; that in describing Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, he intended to depict, under allegorical forms, the three qualities, the three modes of being of humanity, to wit: vice; passion, which is the struggle between virtue and vice; and finally, virtue. Now, here is what has been taught from time immemorial in the Brahmanical schools of Ellora and Benares: "The soul of man has three qualities; goodness, passion, and darkness. The distinctive sign of goodness is knowledge; that of darkness is ignorance; that of passion consists in desire and aversion. To the quality of goodness belong the study of the sacred books, austere devotion, religious science, purity, the fulfilment of duty, and meditation on the Supreme Soul. To act only in the hope of reward, to give oneself up to the guidance of the senses, to abandon oneself to discouragement, are the marks of the quality of passion. Cupidity, indolence, atheism, the omission of the prescribed acts, are the signs by which we recognize the quality of darkness." This threefold division is not limited to the phenomena of the moral life; it extends to the whole of creation, of which man is the image. "The three qualities accompany all beings." It is by them that we distinguish on earth genii, men, and the innumerable tribes of animals and plants. More than this, they pass beyond the limits of our temporary dwelling-place; they embrace and share between them the three worlds: to goodness belongs the world of gods, to passion is given over that of men, and darkness reigns in the world of demons. The Indian sects have multiplied indefinitely; in all of them the distinction of the three qualities has remained as a principle giving its form to the entire theological teaching.[1]

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[1] Manou, xii., 12; and following, 26-39.—Dante, *Epist. ad Can. Grand.* And especially the preface to the commentary ascribed to his son, cited above.

CHAPTER II.

RELATIONS OF DANTE'S PHILOSOPHY TO THE SCHOOLS OF ANTIQUITY.—PLATO AND ARISTOTLE.—IDEALISM AND SENSISM.

AND yet, Asia must have been for Dante what it still is for us, a region veiled in the shades of mystery. It was on the horizon of Greece that he saw the light of philosophy rise for the first time in all its glory. He followed it through its principal phases, which he found described in several excellent ancient works, but especially in those of the first and most complete historian of the science, Aristotle.[1] Doubtless, the translation of the Ethics, by his master, Brunetto Latini, had early familiarized him with the stagyrite. Later, two complete versions and numerous commentaries had enabled him not only to penetrate deeply into the immense edifice of the peripatetic teaching, but even closely to examine all its parts.[2] These manifold explorations did not remain without result; in the Convito alone, we find, in addition to simple allusions, seventy quotations from the Metaphysics, the Physics, the Treatise on the Soul, the Ethics, the Politics, from the various writings making up the Organum, and from other less famous essays. These reminiscences likewise serve Dante as authorities within whose shadow he can find shelter: he allows them as much empire over his convictions as they occupy space in his memory. Aristotle receives from him the most appreciative names: the Doctor of reason, the Sage from whom nature had withheld the fewest of her secrets, the Master of those who know. Temporal society, according to him, in order to prepare for itself long ages of prosperity, would only have to subject itself to the two powers, the philosophical and the political, Aristotle and the Emperor. After having exalted the successors of the Cæsars to so lofty a position, he gives them as their colleague in the government of the world, the preceptor of Alexander; he seats him as the sole *immortal* on the throne which princes occupy only temporarily. He goes farther, and, calling to mind the errors made by the philosophers of the first ages in pursuing their researches for the Sovereign Good, the Last End of human existence, he shows the truth as partly seen by Socrates and Plato, but as finally disengaged by the efforts of Aristotle from the obscurity still surrounding it. And since the ordering of the means pertains to him who knows the end, as mariners confidently depend on the skill of their pilot, so those who float on the stormy sea of life ought to give themselves up to the direction of the inspired guide sent them by Heaven. Thus all the destinies of science are embraced within the peripatetic teaching. Eminently worthy of credence and obedience, consecrated by universal adoption, it has acquired a religious character: we may even proclaim it catholic.[1]

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[1] It is in fact according to the account given by Aristotle, that Dante is accustomed to report the opinions of the more ancient philosophers. He also borrows much from the historical narrations of Cicero. See the Convito, *passim*.

[2] Convito, ii., 15. He cites two translations of Aristotle, the old one and the new. St. Thomas makes the same distinction.—Convito, iv., 8, quotation from the prologue of St. Thomas on the Ethics.

After this definite recognition of a sovereignty before which every intelligence was in duty bound to bow, it would seem as if the promised fidelity ought to have been maintained. We are hence, for the moment, astonished to hear grave witnesses place Dante as a faithless vassal in the opposing ranks, and represent him as one of the most illustrious disciples of Plato.[2] However, we find Plato numbered among the precursors of Aristotelianism, and awarded a lofty pre-eminence over the founders of the other schools. Dante often mentions him as an excellent man; he avails himself of his example; if he differs from him, it is always after most respectful preliminaries; if he condemns him, he hastens to point out a possible justification.[1] We cannot doubt that he was acquainted with the Timæus, on which two commentaries existed in his day; one by Chalcidius used with favor in scholastic teaching; the other, by St. Thomas Aquinas, the loss of which is greatly to be deplored. But especially Cicero, Bœthius and St. Augustine, with sundry other Christian teachers whose writings are still redolent of the perfume of the Academy, must have exerted upon him an irresistible influence, and have attracted him as a perhaps involuntary proselyte to Platonic ideas.[2]

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[1] Convito, i., 9; iii., 5; iv., 2, 17, 27.—Inferno, iv., 44.—Convito, iv., 6. See the whole chapter. Dante nevertheless recognizes the insufficiency of Aristotle on sundry points of theology and astronomy. Convito, ii., 3, 5; iv., 15, 22.

[2] Marsilius Ficinus, apud *Clarorum Virorum Theodori Prodomi*, etc. *Epistolas* ex Codd, *MSS. collegii Romani*, Romæ, 1754.—Brucker, *Hist. critic. philos.*, Period iii., part i., bk. i., chap. i.—*Memorie per la vita di Dante*, etc.

Hence it becomes proper to consider what elements the two great Greek schools can claim in the philosophy of Dante.

2. Several general features suggested themselves in the beginning as likely to characterize the philosophical genius of the Italian poet; the study of his work has rendered these easily recognizable. They are, a bold, and naturally, metaphysical turn of thought, placing itself from the outset in the invisible world, be-

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[1] Convito, ii., 5, 14; iii., 9; iv., 15.—Paradiso, iv., 8-19.—*Epist. ad Can. Grand*..... "We indeed see with our intellect many things which words are wanting to express, which fact is abundantly insinuated by Plato in his books through the employment of metaphors. He knew many things by the light of intelligence which he was not able to express in direct speech."

[2] Bœthius *de Consolatione*, lib. i., pros. 3; lib. iii., pros. 9; lib. v., pros. 5. St. Augustine, The City of God, bk. viii. Confess., vii., 9, and *passim*.

yond the limits of time and of this earth; a metaphorical form of expression (not the result of caprice, but of a system), which utilizes all the images of creation, for the reason that all reflections of the eternal truths that it purposes to show forth; and lastly, an all-pervading aspiration toward two things not found here below in their entirety, but still capable of being here partially realized—perfection and happiness. But this triple tendency toward the true, the good, and the beautiful—is not this exactly that which constitutes the chief honor of the genius of Plato? He too abandons the world of phenomena and appearances, the cavern wherein are limned pale shadows, that he may go where he can contemplate absolute realities in the noonday light of metaphysics.[1] Accustomed to consider visible things merely as representative of divine conceptions, he sees in nature only a magnificent language spoken by the Most-High; he endeavors to employ the same speech, and his style glows with the admirable color which makes it the envy of poets. And yet he disdains to wander off into idle speculations, or to forget his aim, in listening to the flattering sound of his own discourse; his words call for positive results, and salutary reforms; for him, all science is resolved into the science of the Good. This science is the express object of all his lessons; and his disciples, surprised to hear him discourse under this head of geometry and astronomy, of gymnastics and music, will finally comprehend him when from these various ideas he disengages the laws that are to preside over the improvement and the happiness of mankind.[1] Faculties so similarly balanced in the two minds, give reason to anticipate a remarkable similarity in their products.

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[1] Cousin, Course of History of Philosophy, vol. i., Lesson 7.—Plato, Republic, book vii.—When citing in the notes the Dialogues of Plato, we do not intend it to be supposed that Dante had seen the texts, and thence had a direct knowledge of the passages referred to; we are only concerned in establishing analogies, not in showing reminiscences.

Among all the conjectures by which the Greek philosophers endeavored to raise themselves to a knowledge of the Divinity, none had agreed more nearly than those of Plato (incomplete as they were) with the revelations of Christianity: they had obtained the approbation of its gravest apologists; Dante was not called upon to be more severe. The God adored by the disciple of Socrates is demonstrated not only by the mechanical forces of, but by the general order reigning in, nature. He is then conceived not only as powerful, but also as intelligent and good;[2] he is incorporeal, he is the first equation, the absolute beauty, the absolute unity, the being that knows neither change nor repentance.[3] Sovereign of the universe, he is not confounded with the universe;[1] he remains independent and alone, himself sufficing to his own beatitude. By the glimmer of certain expressions, which perhaps betray the secret of an esoteric teaching, it would seem as if one might perceive in this idea of the divine unity, a vestige of the dogma of the Trinity, whether perhaps the founder of the Academy had in some of his wanderings been initiated into the mysteries of the Hebrews, or whether, more probably, he had gathered together some scattered remains of the primitive traditions.[2] However this may be, we cannot deny the importance of his theory regarding the Word, the eternal generation and the future incarnation of Whom were doubtless unknown to him, but Whom he recognized as the Orderer of nature as well as the Illuminator of reason. Here is indeed the central point of the famous Platonic doctrine of ideas; and here is also where Dante seems at first sight to be an imitator of Plato.

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[1] Plato, Republic, vi. See also the fragment of Aristoxenes cited by M. Ravaisson: *Essei sur la mataphysique d'Aristote*, page 71.

[2] Plato, The Laws, x.; Republic. vi.

[3] Plato, Phædo. Cf. Dante, Paradiso, xv., 25.

In the beginning of things, as such beginning is portrayed by Greek philosophy, appeared the infinite Goodness, inaccessible to avarice or to jealousy, and desirous of surrounding Itself with works as far as might be good and perfect as Itself.[3] These works could not be carried into effect without some pre-existing model, some pattern previously formed, some word which the artist utters within himself to guide him in his work, which word is nothing other than his reason applied to some determinate object.[1] This may hence be called, a universal idea.[2] Such an idea, in so far as it corresponds to the different classes of beings embraced within the universe, is divided into so many distinct ideas. Ideas are endowed with a supreme reality, whether they remain as simple attributes of the divine understanding, or whether they become detached from it as living emanations. Immaterial and immutable, they lend their essence to all that happens and that comes within our ken; it is by a constant participation in the idea which is the type of their kind, that individuals exist.[3] But along with this element of life and of perfection, there is in individuals a necessary element of corruption: the work never realizes the primal design in all its integrity. We must look for the cause of this in some blind and fatal force, in that receptacle of existences, called by us matter, which Plato presumes to be uncreated, and consequently invincible in its resistance.[4] Now, if we replace the role of *Disposer* by that of

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[1] Idem, Politics.

[2] Timæus, *passim.*

[3] Timæus. Dante, Paradiso, xxix., 5.

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[1] Timæus,—*et plurib, aliis loc.*—Cf. Paradiso, x., 1; xiii., 19.

[2] Plutarch, *de Placitis philosophorum.*

[3] Timæus; Republic, x.; Parmenides.—Cf. Paradiso, viii., 35. Convito, iii., 6.

[4] Theactet.—Cf. Chalcidii, *Comment. ad hunc locum*, p. 399. See also the learned commentary of M. Martin on the Timæus; Dante, Cf. Paradiso, xiii., 23; Convito, iii., 6. *De Monarchia*, II.

Creator, do we not here find Dante's conceptions in regard to the beginning of things: the motives determining the action of the Almighty; the Idea engendered by the Supreme Ruler being reflected through every gradation of the universe, and sustaining by an interior energy the lowest creatures; also the source of imperfection placed in matter, a stubborn wax that refuses to correspond entirely to the imprint placed upon it, or rather, an insufficient reservoir for the holding of all that infinite fecundity could bring forth? This last feature is above all remarkable in that the conclusion is accepted without the premises, and matter is presumed to be cause of evil, although despoiled of its supposed eternity.

In passing from the physical to the moral order, ideas are presented under another aspect: they preside over the origin of knowledge. The Supreme Reason, from which all beings proceed, also reveals itself to all intelligences: first to the superior spiritual existences, afterwards to man; it is like a sunbeam touching the heights of the soul, which it illumines, and whence it brings to light general notions, made in the image of the eternal ideas whose name they borrow. These notions taken together, constitute individual reason; they furnish the scientific, unvarying element of human knowledge; the other element, uncertain and fleeting, rests upon the testimony of the senses.[1] Such being the teachings of the Academy, could they find a more faithful reproduction than in that poetical philosophy which regards all light as flowing from the bosom of the Divinity, illumining the contemplations of the blessed spirits, and even diffusing a faint twilight around the woeful dwellers in hell? The living are not deprived of it: they also find in the depths of their souls a power derived from on high, which reigns as a sovereign, and which does not permit the non-recognition of truth.

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[1] Alcibiades, Timæus; Republic, v., x., etc.—Cf. Purgatorio, xviii., 21; Paradiso, ii., 15; Convito, iii., 2; iv., 21.

The one-half of our destiny is *to know*, the other half is *to act*. The principle of activity is love: love fills with its presence the entire universe, it sets the springs in motion, and makes them work together in an admirable harmony.[1] But it is especially in man that its influence is shown. It arouses him by attraction, sets him in motion by the sight of the desirable object, and allows him no rest until union be attained. This union could not be sterile: it engenders not only perishable creatures, but sometimes unhoped-for discoveries, masterpieces of art, generous deeds.[2] Thus, multiform and flexible, love cannot be called good or evil in itself; it obtains its merit from the end toward which it directs us. An inborn inclination draws us on towards gross pleasures;

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[1] Banquet: Discourse of Eryximachus.—Farther on, Socrates boasts of knowing nothing but love.

[2] Banquet: Discourse of Aristophanes; Discourse of Agatho.—Cf. Convito, iii., 3; iv., 1; Purgatorio, xviii., 7; xxiv., 19.

a happier impulse, favored by study and education, leads us to virtue. This latter love is the only one known to the soul of the true philosopher: the sight of beauty awakens in it no impure desires:[1] the beautiful is for it only the splendor of the true, the shadow of an invisible ideal toward which it continually tends; admiration restores to the soul the wings lost in its terrestrial captivity.[2] When tracing these lines, the pen hesitates; it knows not whether the memories that guide it are those of the Phædrus and the Banquet, or indeed those of the Divine Comedy and the Convito.

Analogies will be found to multiply as consequences accumulate. The sublime instinct which leads to virtue divides as it approaches its term; virtue, which is one in its essence, assumes four principal forms: prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice —a classification that has become renowned.[3] But virtue implies fleeing from evil; and the strength to flee, the first that we require in the battle of life, comes only from heaven.[4] It likewise implies an effort to accomplish the good, and it is also in heaven that this effort attains its end. Every man feels within himself a vague desire of which the object, still indeterminate, is that which he calls by the name of *good.* Now, among the things which appear to satisfy his desires, some yield him only a short and incomplete satisfaction; there are others which are alone capable of promising him lasting happiness.

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[1] Banquet: Discourse of Socrates.—Cf. Purgatorio, xviii., 13. The mystical tenderness of Dante for Beatrice is the first modern example of the love sung by Petrarch, of that species of affection which has deservedly received the name of Platonic love.

[2] Phædrus.—Cf. Paradiso, *passim*.

[3] The Laws, 1.—Cf. Paradiso, *passim*, Purgatorio, xxix., 44. *De Monarchia*, III.

[4] Alcibiades, 1.—Cf. Paradiso, x., 29; xxviii., 37.

We must then distinguish between *human* or *secondary goods*, which are the qualities of the body and the favors of fortune, and the *sovereign good*, which is perfection so far as it may be attained through knowledge and virtue, such as it exists, supreme and incomparable, in God Himself.[1]

It is then God from whom descend, and to whom ascend, all inferior goods; it is He who draws to Himself all the desires, or rather, all the memories of the soul. For a time was when it contemplated Him face to face; it enjoyed Him before it dwelt on the earth: it can draw near to Him only by lifting itself up, by becoming free and pure, like to Him, and pleasing in His sight through this resemblance.[2] But so grand a destiny could not be completed within the narrow limits of the present life. It is hence necessary that the radiant perspective of immortality should open out beyond the grave, that it may be to us a refuge from the many disappointments we have endured, the term of our insatiable desires, the recompense of such merits as have received no remuneration here below.[1] At these transcendent heights, whither our gaze can no longer follow them, the swan of the gardens of the Academy and the eagle of Florence still hover together, and are lost to view in a like glorious radiance.

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[1] Banquet: Discourse of Socrates; Republic, vi. Phileb.; Republic, vi. —Cf. Purgatorio, xvi., 31; xvii., 33; xviii., 7; Paradiso, xvi., 6; Convito, iii., 2; iv., 12.

[2] Theætet. Phædrus, *passim*; Minos; Banquet, Discourse of Socrates. —Cf. Purgatorio, xvi., 29; Paradiso, vii., 24.

God recognized *a priori*, in order to explain the world; ideas, that we may comprehend realities; reason, to preside over experience; the future life, to regulate this present life; intelligible truths preceding in the logical order experimental truths; are not these the leading features of idealism?

3. Let us not forget, however, that Dante, while accepting so large a number of Platonic dogmas regarding God, nature, and humanity, never dreamed of betraying the faith due to his first master, Aristotle. Let the muse be as free as she may in her gait, it is impossible not to perceive that she drags after her the remnant of a chain, doubtless gilded, but allowing the iron to be divined beneath the gold—token of a servitude but recently ended. We refer to the technical terms surprised at finding themselves ranged in harmonious strophes, the symmetrical classifications wherein thought finds its place with perfect exactitude, but whereinto enthusiasm does not enter,—in short, to the terminol-

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[1] Epinomis.—Cf. Convito, iv., 22. We might point out still other analogies in the details: the famous comparison of Reason and the Senses to the rider and the horses (Phædrus;—Convito, iv., 26).—The sun considered as an image of God (Republic, vi.; Paradiso, *passim*).

ogy and the method from which Dante, in spite of his efforts, never entirely frees himself. We here readily recognize the powerful influence of the Stagyrite, who first created the language of science, and who gave to it both a lexicon and a syntax when he gave to it definition and division as its constituent principles.

Nothing is more intimately connected with language than are abstract ideas, which in the absence of language would disappear, which indeed, at first sight, seem, out of it, to possess no reality. The ontology is not solely in the words, but neither is it without the words; Dante had recourse to the expressions of Aristotle only to preserve the tradition of his ontological ideas; he held the clue, that he might penetrate at will into the labyrinth. Hence his profound reflections upon essence and cause, the oft-repeated distinction between substance and accident, between the necessary and the contingent, power and act, matter and form. These abstractions are not valueless: the genus is really in the species, the species in the individual; they form, as it were, the subtile woof on which are traced all living realities. Thus has the master spoken, and thus does the disciple understand the matter.[1]

Hence we cannot be surprised if both reduce the whole of physics to the play of three principles: matter, form, and privation. From the opposition of the last two, results motion; and motion, in its variety and its multiplicity, produces and explains the phenomena of the visible world. From elementary molecules up to animated organisms, everything moves, either by impulsion or spontaneously: the revolutions of the stars and the generation of animals are the two most notable examples. However, astronomy and physiology were represented in antiquity by two men, Ptolemy and Galen, whose views, broader and more exact, best satisfied the curiosity of Dante.[1] His confidence in the Stagyrite, shaken on these two points, remained intact on strictly philosophical questions—those that touched upon the constitution, the faculties, and the destiny of man.

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[1] See Ravaisson, *Essai sur la Metaphysique d'Aristote*, vol. i., p. 154. —Cf. Paradiso, xxix., 18, 12; xxxiii., 29.

Man, as defined by the Peripatetic doctrine, is a composite being, having for matter, a body, and for form, a soul. But, as the form can exist only as it is impressed upon matter, the soul, although different from the body, could not be preserved without it.[2] These deductions, which in fact threaten the dogma of immortality, are corrected by the perspicacity of the Italian philosopher: the soul still appears to him as the constitutive act, the essential mode of being of human nature; but he conceives it as separable from the body, and makes it survive in a state of separation. Then, analyzing, as Aristotle had done before him, the powers that are in it, he finds three principal ones, the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational; he explains their unity and superposition; and to make his meaning clearer, he borrows from geometry the same similitudes.[1] When he describes the operations of the senses, especially those relating to vision, he follows in the track of Aristotle, making the figure of the object reach the eye through a diaphanous medium, and pass from the eye to the brain by means of a communicated impression.[2] But nowhere does he show himself a more scrupulous follower than in the exploration of the higher regions of thought, when characterizing apprehension, imagination, and memory;[3] when he distinguishes between the active and the passive intellect;[4] when he takes note of the immutable principles not derived from experience, but self-evident.[5] Thus, all knowledge supposes two conditions accomplished: facts perceived without, a general truth revealed within. So that, sensibility being the seat of sensible things, and the intellect the seat of intelligible things, the soul, in which these two are united, is an abridgment of the universe.[6]

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[1] Physics, i., 1; iii., 1; iv., 11.—*De Cœlo*, i., ii., iv.—*De Generat. Animal.*, ii., 3.—Cf. Purgatorio, xxv., 13; Inferno, xi., 34; Convito, iii. 11; iv., 2, 9; ii., 3, 4; iii., 9; ii., 14; iv., 21.

[2] *De Anima*, ii., 1, 2.—Cf. Inferno, xxvii., 25.

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[1] *De Anima*, ii., 3; iii., 12.—Cf. Convito, iv., 7.

[2] *De Anima*, ii., 7.—Cf. Convito, iii., 9.

[3] *De Anima*, iii., 3, 4.—Cf. Purgatorio, iv., 3; xvii., 9; xviii., 8. Paradiso, i., 3, etc.

[4] *De Anima*, iii., 6.—Cf. Purgatorio, xxv., 22; Convito, iv., 21.

[5] *Analytic. poster.*, i., 31. *Topic.*, i., 1.—*De Anima*, ii., 8.—Cf. Purgatorio, xviii., 19. Paradiso, ii., 15; iv., 21.

[6] *De Anima*, iii., 9. *Ibid.*, iii., 5.—Cf. Convito, *passim.*

While the founder of the Lyceum had devoted his most laborious meditations to the development of logic, and while that formed his chief merit according to the common opinion of posterity, ethics had likewise claimed a considerable share in his investigations; his researches in this direction gave him his foremost title to the admiration of Dante. The poet therein found the phenomenon of love treated in all its details, with a nicety neglecting nothing, but considered especially under the aspect known as friendship: the circumstances amid which this feeling takes its rise, the proportions which it requires between those whom it unites, the inevitable egotism hidden in its very root, the beneficent effects which it is capable of producing: nothing was omitted.[1] The other elements of human morality also had their place in that fine analysis: pleasure and the relation of mutual excitation which binds pleasure to action, likewise the liberty which remains constant between these two, often separating them, resisting enjoyment, even going half-way to meet suffering; vice, and its division into three categories: intemperance, malice, and bestiality;[2] the intellectual and the moral virtues, forming, as it were, two families;[3] also, two methods of life between which men may choose, that of contemplation and that of practical activity, the first the nobler, and the latter the easier.[1] With these data, it was allowable to undertake the solution of the problem of happiness. The good gifts of health, of strength, of riches, entered into it, as essential but insufficient conditions; the true good under which all lesser goods must be co-ordinated, was the activity of the soul exercised within the limits of virtue. And this virtuous activity, when applied to the peaceful functions of contemplative life, gives the fullest measure of happiness to which humanity can attain.[2]

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[1] Ethics, viii., *passim*, ix., 4.—Cf. Convito, iii., 2.

[2] Ethics, iii., 5; x., 5.—Cf. Purgatorio, x., xii., 7.—Paradiso, v., 7.—Ethics vii., 1.—Cf. Inferno, xi., 27.

[3] Ethics, iii., 1.—Cf. Convito, iv., 17.

Finally, having reached the summit of the hierarchy of beings, Aristotle sums up the main results obtained by him in his laborious investigation: the idea of cause, which belongs to the order of abstractions; motion, which is found everywhere present throughout the universe; reflection and happiness, which are the privilege of mankind. From these results combined, he evolves the notion of God. The mechanical forces of bodies suppose a Mover who sets them in motion, who is Himself immovable, and consequently immaterial.[3] He is then pure form, infinite act. But this act can be no other than the act of contemplation, which is also supremely happy. God may then be defined: A thought which thinks Itself eternally, around which gravitate heaven and nature.[1] The gaps and errors in such a theory may readily be perceived: it supposes the eternity, not only of matter, but of the universe; it leaves to the Primal Mover neither providence, nor liberty, nor personality;[2] it can then be admitted only with many restrictions, and the poet-philosopher has by no means forgotten this; but he is indebted to it for profound views and exact formulæ.

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[1] Ethics, x., 7.—Cf. Purgatorio, xxvii., 33; Convito, iv., 22.

[2] Ethics, i., 8.—Cf. Convito, iv., 17, 22.—*De Monarchia*, iii.

[3] Metaph., xiv., 8.—Cf. Paradiso, i., 25; xxiv., 44.

Now, the points we have just mentioned, taken together, constitute what has been called, perhaps incorrectly, the sensism of the Peripatetics, which makes of experience acquired through the senses, the necessary, but not the sole, basis of all knowledge.

4. We have now to examine how the rival teachings of the Academy and of the Lyceum became reconciled together in the thought of Dante, and by what new prodigy age-long controversies were suspended at the sound of the lyre:

....Tenuitque inhians tria Cerberus ora.

In the history of the human mind, Plato represents idealism, and consequently, synthesis; he addresses himself especially to souls endowed with that wonderful power of intuition known also as enthusiasm. As these chosen souls are rare, and follow one another at very irregular intervals of time, the traditions of Platonism were easily interrupted; besides, not being connected together by the bond of a strict method, they were exposed to dispersion, and readily lent themselves to be absorbed in other doctrines. Aristotle, on the contrary, represents sensism, and consequently, analysis. His work is within the reach of any laborious mind; and, as such are born every day, it could easily be preserved by their care, and transmitted as an inheritance coming down through known hands: also, the opinions composing it, being rigidly reduced to a systematic form, would naturally remain inseparable, and retain their common independence. His poetic genius would then have led Dante to the feet of Plato: but he had no ready access to the thoughts of that great man, except through a small number of writings, poorly interpreted. Again, he found all Plato's best conceptions, modified and purified, in Christian theology; he accepted them with pious respect, without being able to trace them back to their origin and to name their author. On the contrary, as soon as he crossed the threshold of the School, he there found the authority of the Stagyrite immovably seated; doubtless, he received his lessons through interpreters, but they gave themselves out as such, and aspired to no higher merit than that of fidelity: he naturally bowed down at the sight of such honors bestowed, and yielded to an influence which nothing resisted. There was room within his mind for all just admirations, for the reason that such admirations are never incompatible. It is true that the disciple of Socrates and the preceptor of Alexander have filled history with the noise of their controversies; and no one can deny that the current of their dominant prepossessions led them to serious disagreements. But also, while nothing apparently can be more opposite than the analysis and synthesis personified in them, nothing better accords with the general harmony of science. They place themselves at two opposite points of view—so to speak, at the two poles of the intellectual world; but they are united by a common axis, and they command the same horizon. Their dogmas, reduced to more moderate expressions, complete and sustain one another. We may even say that the *ideas*, which are the keystone of the arch of the Academic edifice, touch closely upon the Peripatetic *forms*. The *idea*, in the dialogues which so magnificently set it forth, often takes the name of *Eidos*; it becomes *forma*, when translated into Latin.[1] If the *idea* is at once the type and the cause, the *form* is also both the element by which things are known, and that by which they subsist. It is not proven that Plato assigned to ideas an existence distinct from that of the objects which participate in them, and from the divine understanding in which they dwell.[2] Aristotle recognizes the presence of his *forms* in the objects which they modify and in the mind which makes abstraction of them.[1] Dante seems to have comprehended these analogies when, by alternate borrowings, he endeavors to reconcile the two Greek philosophers.[2] His conciliatory intention is still more plainly visible when he makes them both appear in the Elysian Fields placed at the entrance to his Inferno, where he shows them, the one surrounded by respectful homage as the *Master of those who know*, the other, seated at his side, sharing with him the sovereignty of the intellect.[3]

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[1] Metaph., xii.—Cf. Convito, iii., 2.—Paradiso, xxviii., 14.

[2] Brucker, *Hist. critic., in Aristot.*—Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.*, i., 13.

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[1] Cicero, Translation of the Timæus.

[2] Cousin, Course of History of Philosophy, vol. i.

Dante had then found, perhaps under favor of greater distance, the propitious position so anxiously sought by the Alexandrian eclectics, whence one might see the divergent lines of idealism and sensism intersecting one another, so to speak. And yet his relations with the philosophy of the ancients seem to have been restricted within the limits we have just laid down. If he inveighs against Epicureanism, it is more especially against that phase of it prevalent in his own day; and he was only imperfectly acquainted, through the writings of Seneca, with the morality of the Stoics, which he exalted without stint in the person of Cato.[4]

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[1] Idem, ibid.—Aristotle, *de Anima*, iii., 5.

[2] See especially, Convito, iv., 6.

[3] Inferno, iv., 44.

[4] Convito, iv., 28; Purgatorio, i.

CHAPTER III.

RELATIONS OF DANTE'S PHILOSOPHY WITH THE SCHOOLS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.—ST. BONAVENTURA AND ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.—MYSTICISM AND DOGMATISM.[1]

THE age that gave birth to the Divine Comedy had no share in the general restoration of paganism which was ere long to take place in letters and in the arts. The study of the masterpieces of antiquity was ardently prosecuted; but there was not yet affected for them that exclusive veneration which is the less difficult for human pride that it is directed toward distant objects, and amply compensated for by contempt for one's contemporaries and immediate predecessors. The most learned professors of Paris and Bologna, the most renowned artists of Pisa and Florence, understood how to profit by classic models without deserting the sources of Christian inspiration: the lamp of their vigils often shone upon the pages of Holy Writ and the writings of the Fathers. Often, their piety led them to the foot of the altar or to monastic solitude in search of more serene meditations; and again, from time to time, these upright and single-hearted men took pleasure in frequenting popular assemblages, where legends and traditional canticles revealed to them truths and beauties they would not have found elsewhere.

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[1] It must be remembered that St. Bonaventura and St Thomas were not the heads of two mutually exclusive and rival schools, but only the propagators of two philosophical methods, distinct, and yet easily reconcilable.

The daily intercourse maintained by Dante with the writers of Greece and Rome had not detached him from a still more intimate communion with the Doctors of Christianity. He beheld them, linked hand in hand down the ages, from the time of the catacombs to his own day, forming a long and twofold chain: on the one side, the Greek and Oriental school, whose learned contemplations had became known to him through St. Dionysius the Areopagite; and on the other, the Latin school of the West, which he had followed through all its phases; St. Augustine, Bœthius, and St. Gregory the Great, who are to be classed as still belonging to Roman literature; St. Martin of Braga, Isidore of Seville, Bede, and Rabanus Maurus, men of the barbarian period; St. Anselm, St. Bernard, Peter Lombard, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, who inaugurated the labors of the Middle Ages.[1] He names all these with praise, and repeatedly cites them either expressly or by allusion. Among those in whose midst his life was passed, he appears to distinguish several who have survived the great shipwreck of time: Ægidius Colonna, Peter the Spaniard. and the Sigier whose bold teachings set the *rue du Fouarre* in commotion.[1] But it is remarkable that he keeps absolute silence in regard to Raymond Lully, Duns Scotus, and Ockham, who at the beginning of the fourteenth century opened a new scholastic era. Hence, it is the thirteenth century, with its calm and majestic grandeur, with the close alliance then maintained between the four powers of thought—erudition, experience, reasoning, and intuition—which we are to find reproduced in the philosophy of Dante. We can form some idea of the extent of his reading and studies if we consider the innumerable reminiscences found in his writings; he thus followed the example of Albert the Great, whose vast repertories we often find him consulting. Although he seems not to have known of the labors of Roger Bacon, the astronomical or meteorological descriptions and comparisons frequently adduced as if of special interest to him, the observations set forth, and the thesis maintained "on the two Elements, Fire and Water," show him to have been initiated into the experimental sciences. But erudite researches and the exploration of nature were not enough to satisfy the indefatigable energy of his mind: he found a broader and freer field in the speculations to which St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura had opened the way. These two illustrious men shared between them the sympathies of the philosopher-poet. They had lived long enough to allow of his being a witness to the grief accompanying their death. In the learned world, he encountered their memory quite recent and all-powerful, their teachings and their virtues still confounded in one and the same living remembrance, and, as a consequence, the respect which they inspired still filled with love. Thus did he sometimes treat with them as with noble but kindly friends, quoting in support of his opinions, with a sublime familiarity, *the good brother Thomas.*[1] And yet he anticipated, in his philosophical judgment he even went beyond, the solemn apotheosis which religious authority was one day to award to that same *Brother Thomas*; he placed the two Angels of the School in one of the most beautiful spheres of Paradise; he represented them as in a condition of fraternal sovereignty, towering above the blessed company of the Doctors of the Church.

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[1] Paradiso, x., xii., *passim. Epist. ad Can. Grand.*—Convito, *passim.*

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[1] Paradiso, x., xii.

Thus the doctrines of Dante could not fail to exhibit traces of the ascendency exercised over him by the two principal masters of his time, themselves the representatives of all that was wisest and purest in the scholastic teachings anterior to their day.

2. In the first place, the greater part of the latent inclinations

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[1] Convito, iv., 30: *Il buon fra Tommaso.*

attracting Dante to the doctrines of Plato, would lead him to bow before St. Bonaventura and the still older mystics, such as the monks of St. Victor, St. Bernard, and St. Dionysius the Areopagite. There existed a peculiar affinity between the seraphic Franciscan and the head of the Academy. Of all the ancient philosophers, St. Bonaventura quoted none with greater predilection. He defended him, with a sort of filial piety, against his adversaries.[1] But especially did mysticism connect itself by numberless bonds with idealism: mysticism, philosophically considered, was nothing but idealism under a more exalted and luminous form. Both regarded union with the Divinity as the source of light to men, and the end of human action. The one set down the place of this sublime union as in the reason, which it showed to be a region superior to that of the senses; the other looked upon it as accomplished in spontaneous inspiration, which it placed above reason. The one propounded the theory of ideas as a hypothesis in which it believed, sustaining it with all the ardor of deeply-seated conviction; the other issued from a state of ecstasy, burning with love, impatient to propagate itself externally with all the authority of virtue.[2] In both, but especially in the last named, a great power was given to the heart over the mind, and the imaginati held the keys of the heart: hence, a real need, a constant ha of allegorical expressions and legendary allusions. Contemplati ascetic, symbolic,—such has mysticism always been, and such is the triple seal wherewith it stamped the philosophy of Dante.

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[1] St. Bonaventura; *In Magist. sentent.*, lib. ii., d. 1; p. 1; a. 1; q. 1.—*Serm.* 1 and 7, *in Hexœmer.*: "Aristoteles incidit in multos errores.... exsecratus est ideas Platonis et perperam."

[2] See, on the characteristics of mysticism, Cousin, History of Philosophy, vol. i., bk. 4.

Contemplation proposes to itself God as its object. The mystics could find no surer way of confounding individual reason, and of obliging it to avow its insufficiency, than that of placing it immediately in the presence of the divine nature and of the two attributes thereof which seem at once the most incontestable and the most incompatible, immensity and simplicity. On the one hand, God reveals Himself as necessarily indivisible, and consequently incapable of having ascribed to Him the abstractions of quantity and quality by which we know creatures; indefinable, because every definition is an analysis which decomposes the subject defined; incomparable, because there are no terms wherewith to institute any comparison: so that one might say, giving to the words an oblique meaning, that He is the infinitely little, that He is nothing.[1] But, on the other hand, that which is without extension, moves without resistance; that which is not to be grasped cannot be contained; that which can be enclosed within no limitation, either actual or logical, is by that very fact limitless. The infinitely little is then also the infinitely great, and we may say, in a certain way, that it is all. In fact, if in immaterial beings the essence and the power cannot be separated, the first cause by its power being everywhere, everywhere also must be its essence This is the force which sustains inanimate things, which is the life of all that lives, the wisdom of all that is intelligent. The divine unity then multiplies itself as by a series of emanations, but it remains superior, isolated, distinct, and without communicating its incommunicable perfections.[1] Below are ranged in divers ranks all creatures, united by a continuous influence. The three hierarchies of the angels, through the intermediation of the triple hierarchy of the Church, pour forth upon humanity strength, life, and wisdom; divided into nine choirs, they act through the revolutions of the nine celestial spheres down even upon the humblest existences almost lost upon the borders of nothingness.[1] These magnificent visions had often visited the anchorites of the desert and the sages of the cloister in their meditations; but, rapid and fleeting, they had passed as passes the electric flash. Dante succeeded in fixing them, and in making their brightness descend forever into the marvellous structure of the Divine Comedy.

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[1] Dionys. Areop., *de Divin. Nomin.*, 9. Id., *Ibid. passim.*—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 17.—Cf. Paradiso, xiv., 10; xxix., 4.—It must be remembered that the expressions used by Dionysius the Areopagite and by his imitators, always feeble efforts of human speech to make divine things understood, cannot be taken in a literal sense, and must always be explained by the general method of thought of the writers employing them.

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[1] Dionys. Areop., *de Divin. Nomin.*, 11.—Id., *de Cœlest. Hierarch.*, iv. —St. Thomas also made use of the word *Emanatio*, and the fact has been misinterpreted, but he formally excludes any opinion favoring pantheism. St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 16: "Ita Deus est in irrationabilibus creaturis ut non capiatur ab ipsis."—Cf. *Epist. ad Can. Grand.*

Asceticism is the practical study of man, the science of sanctification. We have already seen cause to believe that the Italian poem contains a complete ascetic system. We can entertain no doubt upon this matter if we compare with it works of the same kind, by no means rare in the Middle Ages. The legend contained under the descriptions of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, is the story of man, withdrawn from the sombre thicket of terrestrial interests and passions, and led back, by means of the consideration of himself, of the world, and of the Divinity, into the way of salvation. Christian, as well as pagan science, begins by the *Γνῶθι σεαυτόν:* it analyzes the entire economy of sin, of penitence, and of virtue. If it glances at the external world, it is that it may therein recognize dangers for man and glory for God. And if it reveals the Creator, it is less by the effort of thought than by the merit of desire: the interior revelations thus made, not only satisfy the understanding, but they impel the will and direct it in the way of endless progress.[1] The work of Dante, thus reduced to a signification severe but indubitable, merely reproduces the lessons taught by those who professed the cure of souls, from the fathers of the Thebaid, whose sayings have been reported to us by Cassian, down to St. Bonaventura, whose lessons reduced to doctrine that which had been related of the transports and ecstasies of St. Francis. It was in the same school that Dante acquired many of his most interesting modes of viewing things, as for instance the relations between error and vice, between knowledge and virtue; the genealogical order of the capital sins,[2] the reciprocal action of the physical and the moral structure of man, whence result two parallel theories which explain the indications of the human countenance and the effects of mortification.[1] In fine, analogies are to be found even in the general form of the Divine Comedy, which, when describing the pilgrimage of its author through the spheres of heaven (the seat of as many distinct virtues) up to the feet of the Almighty, recalls the favorite titles of the treatises of St. Bonaventura: "Itinerary of the Soul toward God; Golden Ladder of Virtues; the Seven Ways of Eternity." [2]

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[1] Dionys. Areop., *de Cœlesti Hierarch.* and *de Eccles. Hierarch.*, *passim.*—Cf. Parad., xxviii., xxix., *passim*, ii., 42, etc.; Convito, ii., 5., etc. See, on the whole subject of this transcendental theology, the *Precis de l'histoire de la philosophie*, p. 217.

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[1] St. Augustine, *de Quantit. Animæ.*—St. Bernard, *de Consideratione, de Interiore Domo.*—Richard of St. Victor, *de Gratia Contempl.*—St. Bonaventura, *Itinerar. mentis ad Deum.*--Cf. Inferno, i., 11; Purgatorio, *passim*, xxxiii.

[2] The classification of the capital sins, which in itself implies the question of the origin of moral evil, for a long time varied in theological teaching. (See Cassian, *Collatio* v. and St. Thomas, prima secundæ, q. 84.) It is found as set forth by Dante, in the writings of St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, xxxi. 31.—Hugh of St. Victor, *in Matth.*, 3-5.—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, iii., 14.—Cf. Purgatorio, xvii., 32.

In fact, those pious contemplatives, who seemed as if they had irrevocably laid aside the weaknesses of this nether world, nevertheless consented to adorn the austerity of their ideas with all the graces of expression, whether through a merciful condescension toward their disciples, or through that natural attraction which they who are good feel toward that which is beautiful. They retained an affectionate sympathy for the whole of creation, which they no longer regarded in its actual state of degradation, but in the primordial purity of the divine plan. It assumed to them the aspect of a luxuriant foliage, soon borne away by the wind of death, but meanwhile affording shade and freshness, and thus bearing witness to Providence.[1] Still oftener they saw in it a sister, who, only in another fashion, expressed the same thoughts that occurred to themselves and sang the same love. This is why they borrowed from it frequent comparisons, discovered sacred harmonies, and indicated previously undiscerned relations between things foreign to one another in appearance and scattered over the extremities of space. They did the same within the domain of time: centuries, events, and men, were for them merely prophecy and its fulfilment, voices alternately questioning and answering, figures mutually repeating one another. Distances were obliterated; the past and the future interchanged and mingled in an endless present. Thence the admirable Christian symbolism which embraces both nature and history, which binds together all visible things by considering them as shadows of the things that are not seen;[2] an energetic language, of which all the terms are realities, and all the words significant facts; a learned and sacred tongue, having its traditions and its rules, spoken in the temple, and sometimes translated into the speech of stone or canvas, of monuments or edifices. The poet learned it from the lips of priests, and when he repeats it to our profane ears, we scarcely comprehend; we regard as so many daring flights of genius the images which for him were simply so many familiar reminiscences. God represented, now as circumference and again as centre, as an illimitable sea enveloping the empyrean, or as an indivisible point around which the universe revolves:[1]—creatures compared to a series of mirrors, whereon fall, and whence are reflected, the rays of the uncreated sun:[2]—the divers states of the soul personified: the theological virtues by the three Apostles, Peter, James, and John; and the two lives, the active and the contemplative, by Martha and Mary, Lia and Rachel:[3]—the emblems of the eagle and the lion whereunder we recognize the two natures in Christ; the tree of the cross blent with the tree in the terrestrial paradise; Eden as a figure of the Church militant; the statue of Nabuchodonosor, a type of the progressive decadence of humanity.[1] This bold style of the Florentine muse is indeed that employed by the Church, when from her pulpits she pacified the mettlesome courage of our ancestors: it is that wherewith the St. Bernards and the St. Thomases of Canterbury thrilled the people and made kings tremble.

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[1] St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 57–59. These three chapters contain all the elements of a system of physiognomy and craniology. It might be curious to compare it with the systems of Gall and Spurzheim (Cf. Convito, i., 8, etc.). But, if phrenology would escape fatalism, it must lead to mortification. Phrenologically speaking, if the passions are to be restrained within just limits, this must be accomplished by employing hygienic methods, that is, abstinences, to arrest the extreme development of their organs.

[2] St. Bonaventura, *Itinerarium mentis ad Deumi*; *Formula aurea de gradibus virtutum* ; *De vii., itineribus æternitatis.*

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[1] Hugh of St. Victor, *in Ecclesiast.* "Species rerum visibilium folia sunt quæ modo quidem pulchra apparent, sed cadent subito cum turbo exierit.... Dum stant tamen umbram faciunt et habent refrigerium suum."—Cf. Paradiso, xxvi., 22.

[2] St. Paul, Romans, i., 20. "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."

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[1] St. John Damascene; St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, ii., 15; Paradiso, i., 38; xxviii., 6.

[2] Dionys. Areopag., *de Divin. Nomin.*—St Bernard, *de inter. Domo*, xiii. "Præcipuum et principale speculum ad videndum est animus rationalis inveniens seipsum."—Cf. Paradiso, xiii., 19. *Ep. ad Can. Grand.*

[3] St. Bernard, *de Assumpt. Serm.* iii.—Richard of St. Victor, *de Præparatione Animæ*, i.—St. Bonaventura, *in Lucam*, viii. "Petrus qui interpretatur agnoscens designat fidem; Jacobus qui luctator, spem; Johannes qui, in quo est gratia, charitatem."—Cf. Convito, iv., 22; Purgatorio, xxvii.; Paradiso, xxiv.-xxv.

3. And yet, as we have already seen, if the learning of the Middle Ages divided its veneration between St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas, the last named, perhaps through his merit, perhaps through the reputation of superiority enjoyed by the order of St. Dominic, obtained a more decided ascendency over the multitude of studious minds. St. Thomas called up memories of Aristotle by the universality of his knowledge, the solid gravity of his character, by his talent for analysis and classification, and by the extreme sobriety of his language. His intervention had placed upon a sure foundation the long contested authority of the Stagyrite, toward whom he was led, independently of his own personal inclination, by the influence of the great family of dogmatic philosophers (Albert the Great, Alexander of Hales, John of Salis-

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[1] St. Bonaventura, *in Psalm.*, l., 90.—*In Lucam*, 13.—*Sermo de Invent. Crucis.*—Richard, *de Erudit. int. hom.*, i., 1.—Cf. Purgatorio, xxvii.-xxxii.; Inferno, xiv.

bury) from which he was himself descended. In fact, the roots of scholastic dogmatism were laid in Peripatetic ontology and logic. But the vigorous trunk of Christian revelation engrafted on these roots had borne essentially new fruits: the primal aridity of sensism was corrected by the flow of a better sap; religious feeling circulated through the dry veins, vivifying both rational conceptions and sensible truths. This growth could not escape the penetrating glance of Dante, and the thorns by which it was surrounded were not such as to arrest his robust grasp.

The philosophy of St. Thomas and of his school consists less in the principal theses advanced, which indeed belong to theology, than in the proofs by which they are supported, the chain of reasoning by which they are connected together, and the consequences to be drawn from them; all which things are difficult to convey in a rapid summary. We may, however, readily perceive a constant progression from the abstract to the concrete, from the simple to the multiple, which progression naturally divides itself into four series: the science of being, the science of God, the science of spirits, and the science of man.[1]

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[1] This too brief analysis is nearly that of the *Summa contra Gentes* by St. Thomas, and of the first half (*prima et prima secundæ*) of his *Summa Theologiæ*. Metaphysics is found occupying a certain place in the Theodicy, that is to say, that before proving the goodness of God, *good* in general is treated of; before demonstrating His veracity, the *true* is defined; each one of the abstract qualities is examined as it bears relation to some divine attribute. In the same way, pneumatology is sometimes mingled with anthropology: the soul as united to the body is treated of before it is separately considered. However, in general, the logical order is carefully observed, and ideas follow one another as we have indicated.

The science of being in general took its starting point in the notions of substance, form, matter, etc., so learnedly elaborated by the Peripatetics; but it did not stop there; it deduced from these, notions more exact and more living Being, passing through a series of rigorous deductions, became successively goodness, unity, truth. Already, amid the nebulous atmosphere of abstractions, the divine attributes began to appear and to trace their own outlines. Unity, the common condition of all existences; Truth, the sovereign good of intelligences; Good, the term of all the tendencies of nature and of all thinking wills, essentially distinct from evil, which is not merely the absence, but the privation and the loss of good.[1]

Thus, between pantheism and dualism, a safe way opened out whereby natural theology might enter. Supported both on the axioms of causality and necessity, and on the phenomena of daily observation, it arrived at the demonstration of the existence of God.[1] It seemed difficult to go farther, the indivisibility of God not allowing us to isolate His perfections for the purpose of studying them successively; but, by a bold reversion, this very indivisibility was taken as a generating principle of all the combined perfections issuing from it; immutability, eternity, goodness, justice, beatitude; and these were considered as so many terms of a continuous equation always representing, under different names, the totality of the divine essence.[2] Thus were avoided the dangers of anthropomorphism and of polytheism, which attributed to God all the infirmities and incoherencies of a human personality: at the same time, approaches were made toward the dogma of the Trinity, in which we find existing (in an entirely mysterious way) as Persons, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit—Power, Wisdom, and Love. This mystery, incomprehensible as it may be, was connected with that of creation, of which it explained the mode and the motive: the motive, for Love determined Power to realize that which Wisdom had conceived; the mode, for all things, by the sole fact that they exist, that they obey a law, that they concur in a determined order, bear, as it were, some trace of the Father, of the Word, and of the Holy Spirit. In intelligent creatures, this trace (or footprint), of which they are themselves conscious, is more recognizable, and becomes an image.[1]

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[1] *Summa Theologiæ*, prima, q. 11; q. 16, 1: "Verum est terminus intellectus sicut bonum appetitus." (The True is the term of the intellect, as the Good is the term of the appetite.)—q. 5, 3. "Omne ens in quantum ens, est bonum." (Every being, as such, is good.)—q. 6, 1: "Omnia appetendo proprias perfectiones appetunt ipsum Deum." (All things in desiring their own perfection, desire God Himself.)—q. 14, 10: "Malum non est negatio pura, sed privatio boni." (Evil is not pure negation, but privation of good.)—Cf. Inferno, iii., 6; Paradiso, xxvi., 6; Convito, iv., 12, 22, etc.

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[1] *Summa Theologiæ*, prima, q. 2, 2, 3.—Cf. Paradiso, xxiv., 44.—*Epist. ad Can. Grand.*

[2] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, q. 3, 4: "Deus cum sit primum efficiens et actus purus et ens simpliciter primum, essentiam indistinctam ab esse habet." (As God is the first effector, absolute act, and first simple being, there is in Him no distinction between essence and existence.) Q. 4, 2; q. 13. And *Summa contra Gentes* i., lib., I., *passim.*

Among such creatures, those not associated with matter, that is, the angels, good and bad, and the separated souls, whatever their destiny of expiation, of chastisement, or of recompense, became the objects of a special study. We cannot sufficiently admire the boldness with which this study, without the aid of the senses or of the imagination, by the sole power of the reason, entered into consideration of these unknown beings, accompanied them through all the conditions of their incorporeal existence, determined their characters, their functions, their relations, and finally, passing beyond the last bounds of certainty, penetrated even into the realm of probabilities.[1]

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[1] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, q. 44, 4: "Primo agenti non convenit agere propter acquisitionem alicujus finis, sed intendit solum communicare suam perfectionem." (It does not belong to the Primal Agent to act for the acquisition of some end, but He intends merely to communicate His perfection.)—Cf. Paradiso, xxix., 5.—Q. 45, 6, 7: "In rationalibus creaturis est imago Trinitatis, in cæteris vero creaturis est vestigium." (In rational creatures is found the image of the Trinity, whereas in the other creatures is found Its footprint.) Cf. Paradiso, xxix., 6; xiii., 19; vii., 25.

Man, a *whole* composed of soul and body, incomplete if one of these parts be lacking, sufficed to fill out the limits of an entire science; we called it anthropology, but the science is older than its name. It found, at the outset, two errors to destroy: one, which tended to multiply souls in each individual, the other, to allow of but one soul common to the whole species.[2] Then it undertook to analyze the complex facts of human activity, and to distinguish the divers powers which they manifest. The above-named science sometimes recognized three of these powers, nutritive, sensitive, and rational, and again it divided them into two, which it named apprehensive and appetitive. The apprehensive power was the intellect, which by turns active or passive, was viewed as enlightened from on high by the rays of the divine reason, or from below by the light derived from sensations.[3] The appetitive power comprised the natural appetite, which is ignorant of itself; the sensitive appetite, which is irascible or concupiscible; the rational appetite, which is the will: to these three kinds of appetite corresponded the three kinds of love. The will, necessarily impelled to seek good, that is, felicity, had received from God a primordial impulsion in this direction; but the means of reaching the desired end are left to the free will, which can be constrained neither by the counsels of reason, by the seductions of the senses, nor by the influence of celestial bodies.[1] Free will, essential to all natures endowed with intelligence, then exercised its power of choice, electing either sin or virtue. To avoid sin and to acquire virtue, became the labor of the whole of life; but this work, common to all, was to be accomplished in the bosom of society, consequently, under the rule of law. The eternal and sovereign law was presumed to dwell in the Divine Reason, which regulates the relations of things and co-ordinates them to their end. From this source emanated the authority of human laws, just and obligatory, under the threefold reserve, not to exceed the due limits of power, to procure the well-being of the community, and to distribute proportionally rights and burdens.

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[1] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, qq. 50-64; 106-114.—Inferno, i., 39; and Purgatorio, Paradiso, *passim*.

[2] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, q. 76, 3: "Impossibile est in homine esse plures animas. Apparent per hoc quod una operatio animæ, cum fuerit intensa, impedit aliam." (It is impossible that there should be a plurality of souls in man. The fact that one operation of the soul, when intense, impedes another, shows the principle of its operations to be essentially one.)—Cf. Purgatorio, iv., 2, 8.—Q. 79, 5. Cf. Purgatorio, xxv., 22.

[3] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, q. 78-79: "Ratio superior est quæ intendit æternis conspiciendis." (The superior reason is that which contemplates the eternal things which are to be discovered.)—12, 12: "Naturalis nostra cognitio a sensu principium sumit." (Our natural knowledge takes its beginning from the senses.)—Cf. Purgatorio, xviii., xxv.; Paradiso, iv., 14.

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[1] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, qq. 80-83, 115; prima secundæ, q. 27, 2: "Appetibile movet appetitum faciens quodammodo in eo ejus intentionem," etc.; A passage translated verbatim, Purgatorio, xviii., 8.—Cf. *Ibid.*, xvii., 31; Convito, iii., 3.

For political equity being the consequence of natural fraternity, it was plainly asserted that God had not created two Adams, one of precious metal, from whom the nobles were descended, and the other of clay, the father of the plebeians.[1] Beyond the societies of this earth, the kingdom of heaven was shown as a consoling perspective. The dogma of future immortality and the definition of man as it had been recorded, formed two premises whence resulted as a final and glorious consequence, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.[2]

Now, of these four great series of philosophical conceptions, the first two are found, although fragmentary and somewhat confounded together, in Dante's work; expressed or unexpressed, but everywhere present, they are its soul. The last two may be said to constitute its body. What is, indeed, the very framework of the poem, if not an exploration of the immaterial world, wherein figure all its inhabitants, with their darkness and their light, their passions and their affections, their providential ministry;—from the lord of the lower regions and his reprobate subjects, to the loftiest choirs of seraphs? Moreover, does not a continual reversion of thought lead the poet from the apparitions of the life to come back to the things of our terrestrial existence? And have we not already amply set forth the main features of the anthropological system enclosed by him within the cycle of his fabled pilgrimages?

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[1] St. Thomas, *de Erud. princ.*, i., 4: "Ab uno omnes originem habemus. Non legitur Deus fecisse unum hominem argenteum ex quo nobiles, unum luteum ex quo ignobiles." *Summa Theolog.*, prima secundæ, 91-96. These bold principles are also those of St. Bonaventura, *Serm.* iii., *Domin.* 12 *post Pentecost.* It is curious to find them developed at length in a political work written by the preceptor of Philip the Fair, who profited ill by them: B. Ægidii Columnæ, *de Regimine principum.* See especially l. iii., p. ii., cap. viii. and xxxiii., two very remarkable chapters on public instruction and on the middle classes.—Cf. Dante, *de Monarchia*, ii.; Convito, iv., 14, 15; Paradiso, viii.

[2] *Summa contra Gentes*, lib. iv., 79.—Cf. Paradiso, vii., 23-49; xiv., 15; Inferno, vi., 35.

4. In placing himself under the auspices of both St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas, Dante merely carried out the felicitous impulse which had led him to yield by turns to the influences of Platonism and of Aristotelianism. If he had believed in the possibility of a reconciliation between the two princes of the Greek schools, he found the same completely realized in regard to the most revered masters of mysticism and of dogmatism. He beheld them, free from all pride and rivalry, encouraged by the serious and benevolent habits of thought prevalent in their day, put an end to old disputes, and, by a conciliatory decision, resolve the famous problem of universals, which in many respects represented the points at issue between the Academicians and the Peripatetics. Universals, forms, or ideas (for in the language of St. Bonaven-

tura and St. Thomas these three terms seemed to have become synonymous) can be considered in God, in things, and in the human mind. Ideas exist in God as designs and types, as principles of existence and of the faculty of knowing. They are there eternal; they are in the divine essence as the branch is on the tree, the bee in the flower, the honey in the comb; we may say that in a certain way they are even God Himself.[1] In things, the idea, or universal form, is found only as reduced to the condition of the individual, it is objectively inseparable from the material circumstances which individualize it; but matter itself would be useless, and the individual would not exist, without the universal form which gives to it a mode of being, and classes it under a species and a genus. Finally, the human mind can abstract the universal from the determinate matter under which it is contained; the intellect seizes upon the character of universality at the same time that the representation of the individual object strikes the senses.[1] Dante, when adhering to this theory, was at once a wise realist avoiding the sterile multiplication of imaginary beings, and a conceptualist with broad views who could not be confined within the limitations of tangible verities.

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[1] *Summa Theolog.*, prima, q. 15.—"Necesse est ponere in mente divina ideas. Cum ideæ a Platone ponerentur principia cognitionis rerum et generationis ipsarum, ad utrumque se habet idea prout in mente divina ponitur...."—St. Bonaventura, *Compendium*, i., 25. "Ideæ sunt formæ principales rerum quæ in mente divina continentur. Idea moraliter loquendo, est multipliciter in Deo; scilicet sicut ramus in arbore, apis in flore, mel in favo, avicula in nido, quælibet res in sibi propria."

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[1] St. Bonaventura, *in Magist. Sentent.*, 1, d. 5, art. 2, q. 1: "Universale de se non generantur nisi in individuo; est tamen ipsum universale secundum quod principaliter intenditur à generante."—St. Thomas, *Opuscul. de Sensu respectu particularium, et Intellectu respectu universalium.* This treatise, most important in the history of philosophy, ought to be more widely known. It may be judged of by the brief extract which follows: "In things material and corporeal, the individuation of the common nature arises from the bodily matter contained under determinate dimensions. But the universal is constituted by abstraction from that sort of matter and from individuating material conditions. It therefore follows that the similitude of the thing which is received in the senses, represents the thing, inasmuch as it is, as singular, but, received in the intellect, it represents the thing according to the essence of its universal nature.... But, the nature itself of which we can predicate this aspect of universality, has a duplex being: one, indeed, material, according as it exists in material nature; but the other immaterial, according as it exists in the intellect. Verily the conception of the universal cannot come from the first mentioned mode of being, because there the nature is individualized by matter. Therefore the conception of the universal arises inasmuch as abstraction is made from the individual matter: but the nature cannot be abstracted from the individual matter *really*, as the Platonists asserted." See Appendix, No. 1.

However, we should form an erroneous judgment of Dante and of his masters, if we saw in them merely the continuers and reconcilers of the philosophical sects of Paganism. Doubtless, Christianity, with the inflexibility of its dogmas and the respect professed by it for the liberty of human opinions, afforded a sure criterion and the power of a wide choice, two propitious conditions for the founding of a real eclecticism. But this was not all: the vice of, and at the same time the excuse for, the wisdom of antiquity, lay in the profound doubt which it presumed. Essential truths, God, duty, immortality, reached it only athwart the fragments of tradition and the ruins of conscience; they thus were readily misknown and reduced to the condition of simple conjectures; it was then needful that the wisdom of the time should make these matters the subjects of long, patient, and laborious researches; and these researches, grounded upon fallible reasoning, could lead only to uncertain results. Thence the self-mistrust betrayed by the most beautiful doctrines, the constant need felt of re-discussing principles not certainly established; time and genius absorbed by a small number of metaphysical and moral problems; questions of detail and the secondary sciences left altogether in oblivion. On the contrary, Christianity reproduced the truths so ardently pursued in the meditations of the learned; it reproduced them, not only in their primitive purity, but with a new energy, and they became exact, strict, unwavering. Accepted by faith, reason could no longer doubt them without criminality; known to all, no one thought of renewing the search for them: nothing then remained except to study their mutual harmony, to pursue their developments, and to deduce truths of an inferior order: the security acquired in regard to general principles gave to the intelligence the liberty required to occupy itself with the applications, and this security of religious belief allowed of advancing, with sure steps and without looking backwards, into the furthermost paths of the profane sciences. Thus, pagan philosophy was a philosophy of investigation, losing itself in endless generalities amid the prolegomena of an ever incomplete encyclopedic system. Christian philosophy, entirely of demonstration, led to precise, detailed, and fruitful researches: taking hold of the two leading ideas, God and the soul, it freed them from all alloy of error, and laid the foundations of theodicy and psychology; it prepared leisure for those who would one day observe nature, and instruction for those who might be called to reform society; it has truly accomplished that which Bacon named the grand restoration of human knowledge. If then the systems of antiquity seemed in some respects to be continued in dogmatism and in mysticism, among the realists and the conceptualists, it was that they might draw near to one another, and take on a new life under the conciliatory and vivifying action of the new faith. The general tendencies of the age favored this result: Dante, the faithful disciple of his epoch before becoming its master, could then be none other than a Christian eclectic.

CHAPTER IV.

ANALOGY BETWEEN THE PHILOSOPHY OF DANTE AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY.—EMPIRICISM AND RATIONALISM.

It is doubtless a fine sight to behold the learned schools of Asia, Greece, and western Europe, environing the Italian poet with their memories and their authority, thereby resembling the illustrious shades with whom, at his first entrance into the nether regions, he represents himself as holding discourse not to be divulged.[1] We delight in seeing the exile, through the magic of his learning, evoke around him this magnificent assemblage: we never weary of admiring how, amid the obstacles which still rendered study so laborious and so meritorious, his mind could grasp and retain, gather together and set in order, so many conceptions, maxims, and symbols: we are almost appalled when we contemplate the intellectual past of the Middle Ages, perhaps indeed that of the whole human race, thus accumulated in a single mind. However, in this we find but one-half of that which constitutes the task of a great man: he must sum up the past with all the power of an original way of thinking, and transcend the present by preparing the future. He is like one of the seers, depositaries of tradition and prophecy, raised up of old by Heaven to bind the centuries that have elapsed with those about to begin. While thus uniting the ages together, he overtops them, he escapes the oblivion which marches on behind them, and thus becomes immortal. What then is the personal glory of Dante? What is the especial value of his philosophy, that which distinguishes it from the teachings which preceded it, and recommends it to the attention of posterity? We shall endeavor to elucidate this point.

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[1] Inferno, iv., 33.

When they together had discoursed somewhat,
  They turned to me with signs of salutation,
  And on beholding this, my master smiled;
And more of honor still, much more, they did me,
  In that they made me one of their own band;
  So that the sixth was I, 'mid so much wit.
Thus we went on as far as to the light,
  Things saying 'tis becoming to keep silent,
  As was the saying of them where I was.

1. Two different characters of genius appear in the history of the human mind: the genius of methods, and the genius of discoveries. Thence arise two kinds of great minds. Those of the first species point out ways and propose researches; those of the second find facts, laws, or causes. The latter add new knowledge to the learning of their age, which they thus enrich by addition; the former fecundate it for centuries to come, and extend it by the way of multiplication. As the individual sciences have to

establish certain truths which especially pertain to them, it is in their service that the discoverers of facts are ordinarily met with: and as the particular call of philosophy seems to be to conduct the sciences themselves in their common effort toward the attainment of truth, it is to philosophy that principally belong the masters of methods. Among these masters in later times we count three famous names: Bacon, Descartes, and Leibnitz, respectively the authors of the *Novum Organum*, the *Dissertatio de Methodo recte regendæ Rationis*, and the treatise, *L'Amendement de la philosophie première.* To this class belonged Dante; and whatever light he may have thrown upon various points, his great merit is, to have acted upon all points at once, by causing philosophy to step out of the scholastic ruts within which it was confining itself, and by impressing upon it a more vigorous practical direction.

It is true, as we have already seen, that there always had been in the Italian character a twofold inclination, a tendency toward the Beautiful as well as toward the Good, toward both the poetic form and the ethical application. But these instincts, still timid, hesitated to bring about their own satisfaction. Philosophers occasionally yielded to the seductions of the muse, but then they laid aside the doctor's cap; and when poets philosophized, they cast far from them their laurel crowns. Or perhaps, some technical sentence might be versified according to the Virgilian metre, some Platonic idea furtively creep into the fugitive stanzas of a sonnet. The language of science, as we have seen, was the language of Aristotle. From the days of Charlemagne onward, it had not ceased to reign in the school, severe, imprisoning thought within its categories, and words within its syllogisms. The four figures and the nineteen modes of syllogistic reasoning were the only rhythms which it allowed, while the monotonous cadence of premises and conclusion formed the sole harmony in which it took pleasure. On the other hand, if sundry treatises upon economics and ethics had been penned by Italians, if the scholastic doctors had accomplished great things for the perfecting of the individual, and the sages of the olden time much for the prosperity of the nations, these partial works remained without a mutual bond, and consequently without their due influence. In this period of the Middle Ages which may be compared to a fervid adolescence, enthusiasm regarding theories left small place for care about action, and science, surprised at her own developments, was absorbed in the contemplation of herself. We have seen noted in previous chapters some remarkable exceptions to this state of things, but habits so general and so deeply rooted could not be shaken by the passing efforts of a few chosen minds. Some great shock was needed, a bold, prolonged, and widely extended impulse, such as Dante was capable of giving.

2. To begin with, if he retained portions of the Peripatetic terminology and classification in order to be intelligible to men whom

long usage had attached to these forms [and also because these forms best expressed his own ideas – *Tr.*], he offered no other sacrifices to the *idol* adored around him under the name of logic. The veneration of the idol was attacked by him in so far as it savored of superstition. He contested the absolute infallibility of the syllogism; the truth of the conclusion appeared to him accidental, so to speak, certainly dependent upon the absolute correctness of the two propositions whence it resulted. Hence he proposed an examination into the specious majors and minors which circulated through the schools as so many indubitable axioms and certain facts. The study of words was forced to give way to the study of things. Consequently, dialectics was reduced to the occupation of a lower, narrower, and more modest place in the hierarchy of human learning, while the abuses introduced into instruction under its protection were duly pointed out. But, as the faults in instruction and in dialectics were all derived from vices common to human nature, it became necessary to combat also these last, whether they had their origin in the mind or in the heart—presumption, pusillanimity, frivolity, and all the passions springing from pride or from sensuality. The ever-living causes of the errors of every age thus became plainly visible. Dante did not shrink from the consequences; having followed these out to their end. he was well aware that in disapproving of received rules, he incurred the obligation of supplying better ones. He did so, and uttered, not in systematic order, but under the free inspiration of his genius, those short and fruitful maxims wherein he began by prescribing the precise determination of the limits of reason and the extirpation of the roots of prejudice; then he inculcated the observation of facts, prudence in reasoning, persistency in sustained meditation, and finally, the discernment of the divers modes of certitude proper to the different orders of ideas.[1] All this does not suffice for us to attribute to the poet a formal and complete plan of effecting an intellectual revolution, but it is more than is needed to indicate a remarkable attempt, a stepping-stone, which, subsequently more firmly fixed by the efforts of Gerson, Erasmus, Ramus, Louis Vives, was enabled to serve as a fulcrum for the still more successful efforts made by the English chancellor, Bacon. Little resemblance as existed between these two in their political lives and in their religious faith, the proud exile from Florence and the disgraced courtier of Verulam nevertheless met in a common destiny of misfortune and of fame. Both condemned by society, in their turn passed judgment upon it, denounced the idols adored by it, charged it with its errors, and showed it the methods that were to lead it to scientific results greater than it had ever hoped for. If the first of the two was the less heeded, it was, perhaps, because the world, frequently disturbed by false alarms, had long before resolved to answer only to the second call.

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[1] See above, Part II., Chap. iii.

Dante, however, was to accomplish still more. Like the sage of old, who, to confound the objections of sophists against the possibility of movement, rose up and walked in their presence, he showed by his example that it was possible for philosophy to move outside of the limitations within which it had until then been confined. He stripped from it the colorless, stiff, and ofttimes wearisome garb of the scholastic method, invested it with all the glory of epic poetry, and gave to it the flexible and unconstrained charms of the language of the people. Thus he placed his legitimate revolt under the protection of national self-love. He realized his pious desire of being able to offer the sacred bread of instruction to such as were (so to speak) mere weanlings, [1] to all who by the lowliness of their origin, the multiplicity of their occupations, or the weakness of their moral temperament, might be withheld from the banquet of the wise and learned. But especially did he victoriously establish the liberty of thought, by making it bend according to its will the power of words, to which it had too long been subservient. He proved the reciprocal independence existing between the *doctrines* and the *forms* of the school, and thus barred the contempt which might one day fall upon the former by reason of their presumed solidarity with the latter. Thus did he simultaneously struggle against the exaggerations of his own time and the unjust judgments of posterity.

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[1] Convito, i., 1. See also the letter from Fr. Ilario to Uguccione della Faggiuola, found in several editions of Dante.

The inspiration which makes poets leads them back to the heaven whence it descended. By its means, they sometimes, without trouble or reckoning, reach the loftiest heights of metaphysics. Now, as all the sciences rest on facts infinitely varied, and rise by degrees to the sole First Cause, we may say that taken together they shape themselves into a pyramid of which metaphysics forms the apex. From the topmost point, where they all meet, one glance around suffices to take in all their faces: principles are seen to be in common, while external phenomena differ. This is why the majority of the great discoveries have been made, *à priori*, by a sudden intuition, by the consideration of final causes, by analogy, by hypotheses which their authors had no time to verify. This is why the mystics, reasoning from God to man, and from man to matter, often had presentiments of those laws of nature of which the complete revelation was reserved to later ages. He who penned the Divine Comedy seems to have experienced something similar. Sundry commentators, carried perhaps somewhat too far by the charm pertaining to marvellous origins, have thought to find in his lines the germs of the most fruitful conceptions of physiology: the circulation of the blood. the configuration of the brain, organic lesions brought into relation with the order and the perturbations of the faculties of the soul. But we cannot contest his claim to other suggestions more felicitous. When he shows the universality of beings, surrounded, attracted on every side, and, as it were, dilated by love, which communicates to them a ceaseless rotation; the mutual action and reaction of the heavens; weight contracting the terrestrial globe and causing heavy bodies to fall upon it; we might say that he had had a glimpse into the mechanical combinations of the forces which move the world and of the law of universal attraction which Newton was to read in the skies. The need for a symmetrical construction leads him to presume in another hemisphere the existence of those unknown lands on which Christopher Columbus will one day set foot. Or again, his conjectures induce him to suspect ancient catastrophes which have changed the face of the earth, antediluvian revolutions in the condition of the ocean, and deep seats of fire warming the soil beneath our feet. He does not reach the hypothesis of a central fire, for he gives to our globe a nucleus of ice, thus sporting, five hundred years in advance, among the varying systems that geology was to give rise to, from Buffon to Cuvier.

The effort toward a reform in the use of logic, and the sketching out of a new method; the freedom of the intellect reconquered, and its first exercise recompensed by an insight into sundry truths on which depended the entire progress of the physical sciences;

—these are the services which associate Dante with the growth of modern empiricism. But he well knew how to avoid its aberrations; he kept far away from the paths whereby, in later times, the crowd of men plunged deeply into the slough of materialistic doctrines and utilitarian systems.

3. A better star guided him, or rather, he was occupied with nobler cares. Religion and sorrow, those two good counsellors, induced him to look beyond the scenes of earth and material needs, toward the things pertaining to the future life. There it was that he perceived the reason for this terrestrial existence, the sanction of the decrees of conscience, the realization of happiness or misery contained beforehand in our merits and our demerits, in short, the final goal of human life and action. The guidance of such life and action must thence appear to him the sole reasonable employment of our knowledge. Not only did he attach to the mysterious visions of his poem a whole ascetic theory of moral perfection, but he brought to bear upon this theory studies the most varied and apparently the most foreign to it. Taking death as his point of view, he conceived the plan of a philosophy of life: he made this the centre and the bond of union of all his subsequent researches; he made of it a universal science. Now, this practical wisdom, this positive side of knowledge, is precisely what distinguished the two celebrated schools of the seventeenth century; that of Descartes, whence issued

Nicole, Bossuet, and Fénelon; and that of Leibnitz, in which the German mind was to acquire the depth and gravity which make its pride.

But the thoughts of Dante, although they often tended toward the consideration of death, were not accompanied by the egotism so often hidden under a melancholy exterior. Besides, the great breadth of his views did not allow him to ignore the relations whereby the eternal destiny of individuals is bound to the temporal vicissitudes of society. Hence, pious solicitudes bore him back to the midst of the political disputes into which he had been drawn in earlier years by the passions of his youth. In no direction did his ideas develop with more energy and originality. Whilst the commentators of Bologna, living in his day, were losing themselves in a minute interpretation of the *text* of the laws, he soared boldly to the origin, divine as well as human, of all law, and thence drew a definition to which nothing need be added. Doubtless, he borrowed from the publicists of his own time many of the arguments on which he bases the sovereignty of the Holy Empire. But the empire as he conceives it, is no longer that of Charlemagne, standing with its universal suzerainty at the head of the individual royalties, which in turn hold under their allegiance all the inferior ranks of a feudal aristocracy. His is a new conception, closely related to two grand phases of history: on the one side, the primitive Roman empire, in which the prince, invested with the tribunitial power, represents in his triumph the plebeians victorious over the patriciate; and on the other, the French monarchy, rising through its alliance with the communes, upon the ruins of the nobility. The depositary of power, even under the name of Cæsar, his head crowned with the imperial diadem, is, in the eyes of Dante, the immediate agent of the multitude, acting as a level equalizing all heads. Among privileges, none appears to him more odious than that of birth; he shakes feudalism to its very base, and his severe polemics, when attacking the inheritance of honors, does not spare the inheritance of property, limiting it to certain conditions. He had searched the loftiest regions of moral theology to find the generative principles of a philosophy of society: he thence pitilessly pursued the deductions drawn, down to the most democratic and most impracticable maxims. He passed over the entire ground traversed by inquiring minds, from Macchiavelli, the first who attempted to reduce to learned forms the art of government, down to Leibnitz, Thomasius, and Wolf, who vivified the abstract ideas of metaphysics by transporting them into the realm of law, national and civil; and again, from Montesquieu, Beccaria, and the encyclopedists, down to the bloody revolution which put in practice the ultimate consequences drawn from their teachings. Later still, when the disciples of Saint-Simon promised the guerdon *to each one according to his capacity*, and *to each capacity according* *to the work accomplished*, these bold innovators were merely echoing views expressed in a moment of bitter discontent by the old singer of the Middle Ages.

Finally, the interests of the nations, always restricted within certain limitations of space and time, did not yet offer a sufficiently broad arena for the employment of his thoughts. Catholicity, in whose bosom he was born, had taught him to embrace in a wide feeling of fraternity men of all times and all places. This generous mode of viewing things never left him even amid his most learned labors, and his thought, as well as his love, took into account the whole of humanity. When in the *Convito* he endeavors to surround the dogma of the immortality of the soul with irrefragable proofs, it is to the unanimous convictions of the human race that he appeals. When he wishes to refute the haughty prejudices of an hereditary aristocracy, he goes back to the common cradle of the whole human family. When in the treatise, *de Monarchia*, he desires to propose a perfect form of government, he wishes to see it realized over the whole face of the earth that the work of civilization may be hastened, a work which is none other than the harmonious development of all intellects and all wills. When he enumerates the conquests of the Roman people, he shows them as taking their place in the economy of the designs of Providence for the redemption of the world. The Divine Comedy is in fact the outline of a universal history. In that vast gallery of death, no great figure is missing: Adam and the patriarchs, Achilles and the heroes, Homer and the poets, Aristotle and the sages; Alexander, Brutus, and Cato; Peter and the Apostles, the Fathers of the Church and the saints; with the whole succession of those who had worn, with shame or with honor, the crown or the tiara, down to John XXII., Philip the Fair, and Henry of Luxemburg. Political and religious revolutions are represented under allegories easily translatable into as many severe judgments. While we thus follow humanity through the exterior transformations which it ceaselessly undergoes, we also find in it the element of constancy which it contains: amid diversity, unity is revealed; in the midst of change, permanency. In the depths of the infernal zones, on the painful ways of Purgatory, amid the glories of Paradise, it is always *man* whom we meet—lost, expiating, or rehabilitated; and when at the close of the poem the last veil is lifted, and we are permitted to contemplate the Divine Trinity, we perceive in Its depths the eternal Word united to human nature. This latter is then not only, as the ancients said, a microcosm, an abridgment of the universe; it extends throughout the universe, it even passes beyond it and loses itself in the infinite. We may herein find an entire philosophy of humanity, which is at the same time a philosophy of history. It is well known how great is the favor enjoyed by this species of study, inaugurated by the Bishop of

Meaux, enriched by the speculations of Vico, Herder, and Frederic Schlegel, and destined to harvest the fruit of all the labor that an indefatigable erudition is carrying on around us.

Dante may hence be numbered among the most remarkable precursors of modern rationalism, in that he was among the first to give to philosophical science a moral, political, and universal direction. And yet, he did not fall into the excesses we have witnessed in our own day. He did not deify humanity by representing it as sufficient to itself, without other light than that of its own reason, with no law but that of its own will. Neither did he confine it within the vicious circle of its terrestrial destiny, as do those for whom all the events of history are in turn merely the effects and the necessary causes of other events, past or future. He placed humanity neither so high nor so low. He saw that it is not wholly in this world, through which it passes, so to speak, in swarms; he went first of all to seek it at the end of the journey, where the numberless pilgrims of life are gathered together forever. It has been said that Bossuet, wielding the rod of Moses, drives the generations to the grave. We may truly say that Dante there awaits them, holding the scales of the last judgment. He takes his stand upon the truths that they ought to believe, on the justice that they ought to observe, and he weighs their deeds with the weights of eternity. He points out to them the places on the right hand or on the left which their virtues or their crimes have prepared for them; at the sound of his voice, the multitude divides, and passes on through the gates of Hell or up the pathways that lead to Heaven. Thus, with the remembrance of our eternal destinies, morality re-enters into history; humanity, humiliated under the law of death, is lifted up through the law of duty; and if we must deny it the honors of a proud apotheosis, we yet save it from the ignominy of a brutish fatalism.

4. Thus, the logical and practical tendencies of the philosopher-poet chime in with those of our own time, without partaking of their errors. There is within us a self-love which makes us gladly welcome a resemblance to ourselves, and which also makes us regard the superiority of others to ourselves as a consolation, because such superiority leads us not to despair of the nature with which we are endowed. Thence flow the universal admiration and sympathy which in these later days have called from oblivion the great man whose work we have been considering. "Dante," says M. de Lamartine, "seems to be the poet of our era, for each epoch adopts and rejuvenates some one of the immortal geniuses who are always as well men of their time; it meets its own reflection in his being, in him is traced an image of itself, and thus does it betray its nature by its predilections "[1]

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[1] Discourse on the occasion of his reception into the French Academy.

CHAPTER V.

THE ORTHODOXY OF DANTE.

Having successively reviewed the principal periods in the history of philosophy, in order to find among the various systems produced, terms of comparison with the doctrines held by Dante, we must now consider these doctrines from a higher point of view, one independent and unchangeable, that of the Faith. Does Dante by his convictions belong to Catholic orthodoxy? This problem has during the past three centuries given rise to serious discussions.

1. Protestantism, at its birth, felt the need of creating for itself a genealogy which might carry it back to apostolic times, and thus vindicate in its behalf the accomplishment of the promise of infallibility made by the Redeemer to His Church. Hence it went about, upturning the stones of every ruin and every tomb, questioning the dead and the institutions of the past, making for itself a family out of the heresies of all times, seeking out the freest and boldest among the geniuses of the Middle Ages, and claiming them as fathers. Naturally, it was by no means scrupulous in the selection of proofs: for it, a few bitter words on the subject of contemporaneous abuses, falling from the pen of some

celebrated man, sufficed for his immediate admission into the catalogue of supposed witnesses to the truth.[1] Dante certainly could not expect to escape these posthumous honors. His vehement satire had more than once been employed against the ways of clerics and the policy of the sovereign pontiffs. Sundry passages in his poem, ingeniously contorted, seemed, it was said, to contain derisive allusions to the most sacred mysteries of the Catholic liturgy.[2] But especially was the last canto of the Purgatorio quoted, wherein is found a prediction of an envoy sent by Heaven to chastise the courtezan seated on the beast with seven heads and ten horns: he is designated by characters forming the Latin word DVX, which may well indicate one of the Ghibelline captains of Lombardy or Tuscany. This envoy was said to be none other than Luther; for the ciphers gave the number five hundred and fifteen, which, if a thousand years were added on one side and two years on the other, would produce the date 1517, the *hegira* of the "Reformers."[1] Such were the main arguments of those who, from the sixteenth century onward, strove to popularize the new opinions under the shelter of a venerated name.[2] Italian patriotism responded nobly through its organ, Cardinal Bellarmine; that famous controversial writer, who in his day bore the brunt of all quarrels touching religion, who had the papacy for a client and kings (as James I.) for adversaries, did not disdain to employ his pen in defence of the national poet.[3] The same questions were agitated in France, no doubt less brilliantly, but with no less erudition, between Duplessis-Mornay and Cœffeteau;[4] it was perhaps through an imperfect acquaintance with this discussion that Father Hardouin pronounced the curious judgment that the Divine Comedy was the work of a disciple of Wycliffe. At a later date, when Italian literature, freed from the fatal influence of the *seicentisti*, fell back upon better traditions, the veneration for the older poets of the land was skilfully employed by the secret societies and associated with their political and religious theories. And finally, in our own days, when the leaders of a party vanquished, but deserving of respectful commiseration, sought an asylum in England, the need of whiling away the sad leisure of exile, perhaps also the desire of making some return for Protestant hospitality received, inspired the new system of interpretation proposed by Ugo Foscolo and supported by G. Rossetti, not without a vast display of learning and imagination.[1] It must be remembered that when the heresy of the Albigenses was suppressed, its remains dispersed throughout Christendom gave rise to numerous sects, whose adherents, under the name of Pastoureaux, Flagellants, Fratricelli, prepared the way for the Wycliffites and the Hussites, themselves the precursors of Luther, Henry VIII., and Calvin. More prudent than these divers sects, but animated by the same anti-papal spirit, a mysterious association is supposed to have been formed, to which Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio devoted their sworn allegiance and the service of their genius. Their writings, from that date, are presumed to cover an enigmatic sense to which the key has been lost: the celebrated women sung by them, Beatrice, Laura, Fiammetta, become so many figures of the civil and religious liberty whose reign they desired to establish; the Divine Comedy, the *Rime*, and the Decameron were to be at once the New Testament and the constitutional charter destined to change the face of Europe. More especially is Dante supposed to have constituted himself the chief of this apostolate—that particular mission having been bestowed upon him in one of his visions, wherein he represents himself as questioned, approved of, and blessed by the three privileged disciples of Christ,—Peter, James, and John.

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[1] Francowitz (Flaccus Illyricus): *Catalogus testium veritatis.*

[2] Purgatorio, xxxiii., 12.

"God's vengeance fears no sop."

The stupidity or the malice of some commentators has presumed this line to be a gross blasphemy against the most holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We now know that the line refers to the custom, then prevalent in Florence, of placing bread and wine on the grave of those whose death one had caused; the idea was that the vengeance of the relations might thus be averted. The custom was of pagan origin.

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[1] Purgatorio, xxxiii., 14. C.

> Plainly I view, and therefore speak, the stars
> E'en now approaching, whose conjunction, free
> From all impediment and bar, brings on
> A season, in the which, one sent from God
> (Five hundred, five, and ten, do mark him out)
> That foul one, and the accomplice of her guilt,
> The giant, both, shall slay.

[2] *Avviso piacevole dato alla Bella Italia da un nobile giovine francese.*

[3] Bellarmine, *Appendix ad Libros de Summo Pontefice*; *Responsio ad Librum quemdam anonymum.*

[4] Duplessis-Mornay, *le mystère d'iniquité*, p. 419.—Cœffeteau, *Réponse au livre intitulé le mystère*, etc., p. 1032.

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[1] *La Commedia di Dante Alighieri, illustrata da* Ugo Foscolo.—Rossetti, *Sullo spirito anti-papale che produsse la Réforma.*

Thus has the poor exile failed to find, even in his grave, the repose which there at least awaits the remainder of mankind. He has been dragged from it to be cast (still robed in his shroud, like a phantom intended to excite terror in vulgar minds) into the arena of contending factions. Happily, pious hands have been stretched forth to save him from such profanation. In Italy, Foscolo encountered learned controvertists;[1] and the oracle of German criticism, A. W. Schlegel, by condemning Rossetti's chimerical interpretations, has effectually set aside the brand of dishonesty which they would, if true, have imprinted on the brows of three great men.[1]

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[1] Preface of the Milanese editors to the Paduan edition of Dante's Convito. See also Cesare Balbo, *Vita di Dante*; Fab. Zinelli, *Intorno allo spirito religioso di Dante.*

2. Now, if we may be permitted to offer our opinion in corroboration of such grave authorities, we shall do so merely by summarily adducing the texts which seem to us decisive; we shall let the accused speak for himself, confiding his apology to his own words.

To begin with, we find him distinctly separating himself from modern naturalism, when he proclaims *revelation* to be the final criterion of logical truth and the moral law; when he formulates his opinion that the noblest function of philosophy is to lead by means of the marvels which it explains, to the unexplainable miracles on which the faith is stayed; when, finally, he gives all glory to that faith descended from on high, through which alone one can merit to philosophize for eternity in the bosom of the celestial Athens, where the wise men of all schools meet in the contemplation of the infinite intelligence.[2] Severe toward heresy and schism, he prepares for them the most frightful torments known to his Hell. Neither political sympathies nor civil and military virtues avail to soften him in this regard; he imprisons in burning sepulchres, Frederic II. and Cardinal Ubaldini, idols of the imperial party, as well as Farinata and Cavalcante, two of the most eminent citizens of Florence: he does more, and, as if to refute in advance the calumniators of his memory, he prophesies the miserable end, and pronounces the eternal damnation of the monk Dolcino, the principal leader of the very Fratricelli in whose errors he is presumed to have been a participant. If the poet, really endowed with the second sight which he sometimes feigned, had, in place of this obscure monk, perceived the Wittenberg professor casting into the flames the *bull* setting forth his condemnation, he would certainly have marked out for him his place among the sowers of schism and of scandal, and we should read with a shudder of admiring horror the episode of Luther, no whit inferior to that of Ugolino.[1]

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[1] Letter by A. W. Schlegel on G. Rossetti's work, *revue des Deux Mondes*, Aug. 15th, 1836. Rossetti's interpretations have been learnedly refuted by Father Pianciani, in the *Annali delle scienze religiose.*

[2] Convito, iii., 7, 11; iv., 15. *De Monarchia*, iii.

If these general indications are not enough, and an express profession of faith upon each of the contested points is considered necessary, this requirement can readily be met. Peter of Bruys, Waldo, Dolcino, and the other innovators of the same period had attacked the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the forms of the sacraments, the honor shown to the cross, and prayers for the dead.[2] Dante renders homage to the Church, the spouse and mouthpiece of our Lord Jesus Christ, incapable of falsehood and of error.[1] He places tradition alongside of the Holy Scriptures, and assigns to both a like power over consciences; [2] he recognizes the power of the keys, the force of excommunication, and the value of vows.[3] He describes the economy of penance with especial predilection; he doubts neither of the legitimacy of indulgences nor of the merit of works of satisfaction.[4] He has himself justified the veneration paid to images; he is never weary of recommending the suffering souls to the suffrages of the living; his confidence in the intercession of the saints is redoubled when he addresses himself to the Blessed Virgin Mary.[5] Finally, the religious orders, even the institution of the Holy Office, find favor in his sight, and St. Dominic is lauded in his poem as "the jealous lover of the Christian faith, filled with mildness toward its disciples, but formidable to its foes." [6]

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[1] Inferno, ix., and xxviii., *passim*.

[2] See Peter the Venerable, *contra Petrobusios*.—Bossuet, *Hist. des variations*, liv. xi.—Raynaldus, the continuer of Baronius, *Annales eccles.* 1100-1200. Reinerii, *Contra valdenses hæreticos*, liber in *Bibliotheca Patrum maxima*. Muratori, *Antiquitates*, dissert. 40, *de Hæresibus*.

When thus placing himself under the patronage of the holy doctor who, under the title of *Master of the Sacred Palace*, was the first person officially charged with the ministration of the censorship, could the poet possibly have imagined that we, a far-off posterity, very slightly versed in theology, would one day venture to discuss the accuracy and sincerity of his beliefs?

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[1] Convito, ii., 4, 6.

[2] Paradiso v., 25.

[3] Purgatorio, ix., 26; iii., 46; Paradiso, v., 19.

[4] Purgatorio, ix., *passim*; ii., 33.—Paradiso, xxv., 23; xxvii., 37.

[5] Paradiso, iv., 14.—Purgatorio, *passim*.—Paradiso, xxxiii., 1.

[6] Paradiso, xi. and xii., *passim*.

But one reproach made against him still subsists, and that is, the persistency with which his invectives pursue the Roman court and the sovereign pontiffs, heaping plenteous blame on the heads of those whose feet he should have kissed. To this we may reply, first, by making a distinction between the *office* of the sovereign pontiff, indefectible and divine in its origin, and the *person*, consecrated, but mortal and open to temptation, who is invested with that office. Catholics have never been required to believe in the impeccability of their pastors. The most ardent defenders of the rights of the priesthood, as St. Bernard and St. Thomas of Canterbury, never concealed the vices which sometimes dishonored the sacred profession. The Church invested with an inviolability far graver than that surrounding kings, cannot be held responsible for the iniquities of sundry among her ministers. Doubtless it is more pious to turn aside our gaze, and, like the sons of the patriarch, throw a mantle over the turpitude of those who are our fathers in the faith. But if Dante forgot this, if, in the evil days he passed far from his native city, he accused the chiefs of the party that kept its gates closed against him; if, in the ardor of an indignation which he deemed virtuous, he often repeated calumnies founded upon hearsay; if he failed to appreciate the piety of St. Celestine, the impetous zeal of Boniface VIII., the learning of John XXII., we may indeed characterize such action as imprudence and the result of anger, as a mistake and a fault, but not as heresy. And besides, we must pardon much to genius, because, like every other greatness on this earth, it is assailed by stronger temptations, and exposed to more numerous perils than fall to the ordinary lot of men. However, it should here be remembered that Dante, the contemporary of fourteen popes, has lauded two of them, said nothing about seven, and, in the five remaining, has undertaken to blame only the imperfections of humanity: he never ceased to venerate the sacredness of the office.[1] When he purposes immolating Boniface VIII. to his poetic vengeance, he begins by despoiling him of the august character which he is fearful of profaning; and, with a temerity not devoid of some remnant of respect. he declares on his own authority the vacancy of the Holy See.[2] Then all at once, when this same pope appears to him girt about with the added majesty of misfortune, a captive amid the emissaries of Philip the Fair, he no longer sees in him aught but the vicar and image of Christ crucified anew.[1] He always bows before the Papacy as before a sacred magistracy, a power which Peter received from Heaven and transmitted to his successors; he in fact makes it the primordial object of the designs of Providence in regard to Rome, the secret of the grand destinies of the Roman empire, the bond uniting antiquity with later times.[2] He insists on the necessity for the religious monarchy, which he contrasts with the temporal monarchy; and, although he calls for a reciprocal independence between the sacerdotal power and that of the empire, he requires that in the spiritual order the heir of the Cæsars should profess a filial deference toward the successors of the Apostles.[3] If this language be pleasing to our " reformed " brethren, and can decide them to reckon the poet as one of themselves, let them speak in a like manner, and at this rallying word the south and the north will exchange salutations; the doctors from London and Berlin will meet at the gates of Rome; the Vatican will enlarge its porticoes for the accommodation of the reconciled generations; and, in the joy occasioned by a universal alliance, will be realized the prophecy inscribed on the obelisk of St. Peter's: CHRISTUS VINCIT, CHRISTUS REGNAT, CHRISTUS IMPERAT.

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[1] Adrian V. in Purgatory; John XXI. in Paradise. See for the others: Inferno, xix., 34; Purgatorio, xix., 43.

[2] Purgatorio, xxxiii., 12.

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[1] Purgatorio, xx., [2] Paradiso, xxx., 48; xxiv., 12. Inferno, ii., 8.

[3] *De Monarchia*, iii. The book, *de Monarchia*, was placed on the index, as favoring the excessive pretensions of the temporal power. But this condemnation was never extended to the Divine Comedy. One great pope held him who failed to admire the beauties of this poem as possessed of an uncultured mind. See the anecdote as told by Arrivabene *Amori di Dante.*

3. Our task is accomplished. The orthodoxy of Dante, sufficiently established by the proofs that have been adduced, seems to us still more plainly evidenced from the entire course of the work undertaken by us and now drawing to a close. We find it to be a dominant truth, the resultant of all our researches and inductions. When studying the circumstances environing the poet, we found that he was born, so to speak, on the latest verge of the heroic days of the Middle Ages when Catholic philosophy had reached its apogee, and in a country illumined by its purest rays. Amid these salutary influences, and through the vicissitudes of a life filled with misfortunes, with moral emotions and profound studies, the whole concourse of which must have tended to develop within him the religious sentiment, we have beheld him conceive a magnificent work, the plan of which, borrowed from the methods of legendary poetry, was intended to embrace both the most sublime mysteries of faith and the loftiest conceptions of science. A scrupulous analysis has taught us to know that collection of doctrines, which, under the three categories of Evil, of Good and Evil in conflict, and finally of Good, comprises the individual man, society, the future life, the external world, the world of spirits, God Himself. If in many ways Dante holds re-

lations with the systems of the East, with Greek idealism and Greek sensism, even with the empiricism and rationalism of modern times, he belongs above all to the two great schools, the mystic and the dogmatic, of the thirteenth century, of which he docilely accepts not only the essential dogmas, but also the accessory ideas, often even the favorite expressions. It has been said that Homer was the theologian of pagan antiquity, and Dante, in his turn, has been represented as the Homer of Christian times. This comparison, while honoring his genius, wrongs his religion. The blind poet of Smyrna was justly accused of having brought the gods down too near to the level of man; on the contrary, no one has known better than the Florentine to lift man up and cause him to ascend toward the Divinity. It is through this quality, through the purity and the immaterial character of his symbolism, as also through the limitless breadth of his conception, that he has left far beneath him poets ancient and recent, more especially, Milton and Klopstock.[1] If, then, we desire to make one of

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[1] See, for example, the gateway of Hell as portrayed by Dante and by Milton. The singer of the Paradise Lost exhausts himself in gigantic images. Forming his gates of nine layers of metal and of adamant, he adds a palisade of fire; he seats before them two formidable monsters, Death and Sin, and only succeeds in astonishing his readers.

> Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
> And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,

those comparisons which fix in the memory two names so associated together that they recall and explain one another, we may say, and such expression would contain an epitome of this work, that the Divine Comedy is the literary and philosophic *Summa*

Three iron, three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape, etc.

Dante, on the contrary, here describes nothing. He needs neither iron nor fire; he is content with an inscription nine lines long, but he leaves us dismayed. Inferno, iii., 1.:

Per me si va nella città dolente,
  Per me si va nell' eterno dolore,
  Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore:
  Fecemi la divina potestate,
  La somma sapienza e il primo amore.
Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
  Se non eterne, ed io eterno duro:
  Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate.

Cary's Trans.:

Through me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain:
Through me among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of Power divine,
Supremest Wisdom, and primeval Love.
Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here.

of the Middle Ages, and that Dante is the St. Thomas of poetry.[1]

Thus do we find ourselves brought back to our point of departure—to the admirable fresco in the Vatican, in which Dante is placed among the doctors, and to the solemn and popular honors which Italy has paid to his memory: we now know the reason of the fame awarded to him. It is that the knowledge he possessed of his own prodigious endowments never made him forget the fatal flaw common to human nature, condemned to suffer and to remain in ignorance of many things to the very end, and consequently obliged to believe and to serve. Far above others as he might stand, he never deemed that the distance separating mortals from heaven was lessened in his case; he entertained for them too much respect and love to seek to impose upon them the tyranny of his personal opinions, to wish to detach them from that which they held most dear, their beliefs: he remained within the communion of the eternal ideas wherein are found the life and the salvation of the human race; he so acted that the humblest of his contemporaries and the remotest of their descendants might call him their brother and rejoice in his triumphs. More than five hundred years have passed since the old Alighieri "went to sleep" at Ravenna, where his body still rests under the sepulchral marble. Since that day, twenty generations of "speaking men," to use the energetic expression of the Greeks, have followed one another; and the words which have fallen from their lips, even more than the dust raised by their footsteps, have changed the face of the earth. The Holy Roman Empire no longer exists. The disputes which agitated the Italian republics have vanished with the republics themselves. The palace of the Priors of Florence is deserted; and on the opposite bank of the Arno, a foreign dynasty, naturalized by benefits conferred, peaceably wields the grand-ducal sceptre of Tuscany.[1] The resting-place of the ashes of Beatrice is unknown; the very name pertaining to her family would be lost, had it not been inscribed among the founders of an obscure hospital. The chairs are silent whence issued the dissertations of the scholastic masters. Navigators have explored the distant seas once closed to men through superstitious dread; and seamen have found on their confines, instead of the mountain of Purgatory and its immortal inhabitants, lands and peoples similar to our own. The telescope has been directed to the heavens, and the nine spheres presumed to move in harmony round our earth have vanished into nothingness. Thus have passed away the various species of interest, political, elegiac, and scientific, wherein the poem of Dante was indebted to the passing things of this nether world; outside of its beautiful poetic form, it would retain no other merit than that of an historical document difficult to comprehend were it not that it had borrowed from another class of topics a universal attraction.

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[1] The "Universal Journal of Literature" of Halle (Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung), in which this book and its author are treated with a truly flattering attention and kindness, nevertheless attacks this chapter upon the orthodoxy of Dante. The critic complains that no heed has been paid to the traces of heterodoxy found in the poem. I regret that he did not point these out, and that he has presented no new objections, which I would have carefully considered. Thus far, I can shelter myself behind two great authorities. I have on my side Catholic criticism, which has never found heresy in the Divine Comedy, and which has reprinted it, commented upon it, praised it, lauding it to the skies, even in Rome, with all the required approbations, and without fear of the rigors of the Index. I also ground myself upon modern Protestant criticism, of which the most competent spokesman, A. W. Schlegel, has so emphatically condemned the paradox of Foscolo and Rossetti.

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[1] (This was written before the recent changes in the government of Italy. —TRANS.)

The mysteries of death, which of yore gave men whereon to speculate, have not ceased to employ our thoughts, and no light other than that afforded by the Catholic faith has come to illumine them for us. As Dante guided the ardent imaginations of our fathers, he still leads our adult and disputatious intelligences; he occupies a place above all the developments of the human faculties, immutable amid the ruins of the older science and the contstructions of the new: he has no need to fear the Christopher Columbuses and the Koperniks that are still to come; for. as those two great men, by discovering the true form and the real relations of our globe settled once for all the wavering opinions held upon those two principal points in the system of the physical world, and left to the navigators and astronomers of the future only discoveries as to the details; so the Catholic faith, by making known man and his relations to God, has revealed for all time the system of the moral world: a new earth and new heavens are no longer discoverable, only individual truths and subordinate laws: too little to satisfy pride, but enough to occupy to the end of ages the laborious assiduity of the human mind.

PART IV.

INQUIRIES AND DOCUMENTS IN AID OF THE HISTORY OF DANTE AND OF CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY.

I.—Dante's Political Life.

Was he a Guelf or a Ghibelline?

We have seen how the Florentine poet took part in the civil discords agitating his country; we readily understand that historians have been tempted to range him on the side of one or other of the two factions which divided Italy during the Middle Ages: general opinion has placed him among the Ghibellines.[1] However, as by his family and his first associations he seemed to belong to the Guelfs, some critics have distinguished in his political life two periods, devoted to the defence of two opposing causes, and separated from one another by the fatal day of his exile.[2] Without wishing to undervalue the authority of the critics and of general opinion, we cannot refrain from entertaining and expressing some doubts on this subject: we fear that the question has been confused by the uncertainty of meaning in the terms used; we shall begin by examining the different significations successively pertaining to the rival names of Guelf and Ghibelline, and then we shall inquire by what title the one or the other could justly be applied to Dante.

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[1] F. Schlegel (History of Literature, vol. II.) reproaches Dante with "the harsh impress of the Ghibelline spirit found throughout his poem."

[2] See especially the learned pamphlet of Count Troja: *Del Veltro allegorico di Dante.*

I.

1. The name of the Guelfs dates from a remote period; we find it even during the time of the great barbarian invasions. Among the companions of Attila, historians speak of a German chieftain named Eticho, to whom they give two sons, an elder, Odoacer, and a younger, Welf. We find that the descendants of Welf established themselves in the county of Altdorf in Suabia,[1] in the duchies of Alsace and Zaehringen, and in the marquisate of Tuscany. Adelbert I., marquis of Tuscany (850), was the head of a branch which, later on acquiring the marquisate of Este, became sufficiently powerful to give, in 1071, dukes to Bavaria. About the same time (1080) the duchy of Suabia was conferred upon the counts of Hohenstaufen, originally from the castle of Weibling in Wurtemberg. The attainment of the imperial dignity by Conrad of Suabia, and the rebellion of Henry the Proud (1138), gave rise to a bloody quarrel between the two families, which quarrel, suspended for a while, was renewed more fiercely than ever under Frederic Barbarossa and Henry the Lion (1180), and

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[1] Memoir on the origin of the house of Brunswick.

finally divided Germany between Philip, duke of Suabia, and Otho IV., the two competitors for the imperial crown. Welf and Weibling were the war-cries calling together the armies of the two inimical houses: it is said they were first heard at the battle of Weinsberg (1140); soon they were repeated from the shores of the Baltic to the banks of the Danube, but, stayed by the Alps, they were some time in reaching the Italian Peninsula.

2. Italy had long served as the arena of still more serious struggles, those existing between the Church and the Empire. The Papacy, the more surely to exercise its sanctifying and civilizing action upon the Christian world, then disturbed by so many barbarian instincts, needed to occupy an independent and central position: thence, for it, the necessity of a temporal domain. Nor were legal titles lacking. Since the time when the people of Rome placed themselves under the patronage of Gregory II., the donation of the Exarchate and the Pentapolis (751), the homage rendered by Robert Guiscard for the duchy of Apulia (1059), and the legacy of the Countess Matilda (1102) had strengthened the apostolic power. It had also in its favor the heroic virtues of many Pontiffs, the mildness and wisdom of the ecclesiastical laws, and the natural inclination of the human conscience to receive in the civil order an authority already acknowledged in matters of religion. It possessed, in fine, all that could create a right, even where such right did not already exist,—the respect, love,

and admiration of the people. On the other hand, the emperors were saluted as kings of the Romans; they wore the iron crowns of Lombardy; they had, unopposed, distributed fiefs in Italy; and the decrees of the diet of Roncaglia (1158) ascribed to them the plenitude of regal rights. They likewise alleged the supposed act by which Otho the Great (963) was said to have obtained for himself and his successors the privilege of intervening in the election of the popes. Neither did they disdain the support of traditions and theories. While they showed themselves to be the guardians and the heads of the feudal system, they also claimed to be the continuators of the old Roman empire' the laws of which, restored to honor by the jurisconsults of Bologna, were pleaded by them. The German Cæsar, the heir of Charlemagne, and the successor to Augustus (*semper Augustus*), considered himself under this title to be the sole master of the world.[1]

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[1] We find a curious monument of the pretensions made by the imperial monarchy, in the Constitution of Henry VII., inserted in the *Corpis juris civilis*, which begins as follows: "In order to repress the crimes of many persons, who break the bonds of that entire fidelity which they owe, and take up arms with hostile intent against the Roman Empire, on the peace of which the order of the whole world reposes; to say nothing of the precepts, not only human, but divine, which command that every human soul shall be subject to the Prince of the Romans," etc.

The question of investitures set in opposition these two sovereign powers of Christendom, in the persons of Henry IV. and Gregory VII. The Pontiff, attacked by a force of arms, found an unexpected ally in Welf I., duke of Bavaria (1077). Welf II. married the Countess Matilda, the benefactress of the Church. When Frederic Barbarossa crossed the Alps for the third time, threatening to crush with a single blow Alexander III. and the Lombard League formed under his auspices, the defection of Henry the Lion at the battle of Lignano (1176) saved them from certain defeat. The son of this prince, Otho IV., was sustained in his pretensions to the imperial throne by Innocent III. Meantime, the marquises of Este continued by their fidelity to render the ancient name of Welf loved and respected by the papal party. On the other hand, never did the imperial domination seem more securely established in Italy than under the reign of the Hohenstaufen, especially after the marriage of Henry IV. to Constance (1190) had added the crown of Sicily to the possessions of their house. The banners of the Weiblingen then rallied round them all the enemies of the Holy See.

Thus became popularized the names of Welf and Weibling, modified, according to the usage of the Italian tongue, into Guelf and Ghibelline. From that period, applied respectively to the defenders of the priesthood or of the empire, they kept their new signification down to the time when Frederic II., at the height of his victorious career, was stricken by the censures of the Council of Lyons (1245). The tyrant, overcome in his turn, and pursued by an avenging fatality, died, smothered by the hand of one of his own bastards (1250). The triumph of the sacerdotal party suspended the struggle for many years.

3. But we have already seen the monarchy of the Holy Empire represented as the necessary crowning-point of the feudal system whose broad base covered the half of Europe. Now, feudalism, founded on the south side of the Alps by the Lombards (who divided their possessions into thirty-six duchies), and strengthened by concessions of fiefs, of which the emperors were by no means niggardly, was perpetuated by the Constitution of Conrad the Salic, who established in perpetuity the hereditability of military fiefs.

Still, these institutions introduced by northern populations could not meet with unreserved devotion among Italians, who preserved the memory and the remains of the municipal organization introduced, in the days of the Roman rule, into all the cities of the Peninsula. Following the example of the maritime cities, enfranchised at an early period, the towns of Lombardy, Romagna, and Tuscany demanded liberties which their rulers sold to them for gold. They found a more disinterested protection on the part of the sovereign pontiff: they confederated into powerful leagues, of which the Holy See was the central point—leagues which more than once protected the national territory against German invasion. The peace of Constance (1183) the result of their courageous efforts, secured to them the right of enclosure, of laying taxes, of choosing magistrates, of making war or peace, and thus raised them to the rank of independent powers. From that time, the nobles were to be found engaged in the service of monarchy; they fought under the banners of the Ghibellines: whereas the people were, by their interests, influenced in favor of the papacy; they contributed to the success of the Guelfs. When the main struggle between the two powers, the spiritual and the temporal, was ended, the aristocracy and the democracy remained armed, and felt desirous of trying their strength against each other: they retained their standards and their watchwords. The Guelfs became the party of communal franchises, and the Ghibellines that of feudal privileges.[1] These new discords filled the latter half of the thirteenth century and were continued far down into the fourteenth. Democracy at first held fast to its acquisitions, but ere long began to imperil them by its own excesses. In the cities of Bologna, Brescia, Padua, and Florence, the nobles were declared incapable of holding political offices (1285–1295). Banished from public life, they shut themselves up in the menacing solitude of their palaces; they there determined upon the ruin of that jealous liberty in which they were allowed no share. Favored by the intestine dissensions which they were careful to foment, they found no difficulty in again seizing upon the reins of power; as early as the year 1300, the republics began to see hereditary seigniories rising up within their walls. But the seigniors, of whom the greater number were first introduced under the titles of podestas, gonfaloniers, captains of the people, retained somewhat of the municipal magistracies which had thus been borrowed to veil their despotic ambition. Beneath them, they maintained that equality which consoles populations under servitude. Above them, they acknowledged no sovereign authority. There then remained no vestige of the hierarchic order which gives to the feudal system its characteristic form; the aristocracy were thus enabled to rule, only on condition of making a compromise modifying the usages of feudalism.

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[1] We can see from the admirable discourse addressed by Pope Gregory X. to the Florentines, what, as early as 1273, was the confusion of parties and the uncertainty pertaining to their names: "He is a Ghibelline; but yet he is a Christian, a citizen, a neighbor. So, then, so many and such valid names of union shall succumb to the name Ghibelline? . . . and this single and moreover empty name (*for what it signifies nobody knows*) shall avail more toward hatred than all those sound, honorable names avail toward love? . . . But since you assert you have taken up these party efforts on behalf of the Roman Pontiffs and against their enemies; I, the Roman Pontiff, although up to the present time these citizens of yours may have offended, nevertheless, on their return, have taken them to my bosom, and, their misdeeds being pardoned, I hold them as sons."

4. Down to this point in the contest, we have followed the

principles around which the warring passions of the time would naturally group themselves. It is easy to see that the passions, after having made proof of prowess in support of one or another principle, would sooner or later come to blows on their own account. Underneath the general interests of the aristocracy and the democracy were working the especial interests again dividing cities, villages, and families. Venice rose up against Genoa, Florence against Pisa, Pistoja against Arezzo: at Verona there were the Montecchi and the Capelletti; the Gieremiei and the Lambertazzi at Bologna; the Torriani and the Visconti at Milan; at Rome, the Orsini and the Colonnas: thus there were private wars, in other words, brigandage, the arming of all against all, the return to social chaos. In this state of things, intervention from without could hardly be a greater evil: it might even appear as a benefit. At that period, three great nations stood ready to intervene in the affairs of Italy. The Germans added to their close proximity the habit they had acquired of being received with their emperors as masters. The French were not far away; they had in their favor the popularity conceded to their language and their character, also the memory, still recent, of St. Louis. Finally, the Aragonese, whose domain extended from the gates of Valencia to those of Marseilles, naturally coveted the empire of the Mediterranean, and consequently of its shores. The usurpation of the kingdom of Sicily by Manfred, the natural son of

Frederic II., obliged Pope Urban IV. to exercise his right of suzerainty over the crown of that country: he called upon Charles of Anjou to take possession of it. As a captain of the Church of Rome, and the vanquisher of Manfred and Conradin (the last of the Weiblingen), the Angevine prince seemed to continue the work of the older Guelfs. The use of the name was extended to include all who were friendly to France, and it continued to be thus applied even after the sacrilegious outrage at Anagni. But Conradin found an heir in Peter of Aragon, who meantime had founded a Spanish dynasty on the other side of the pharos of Messina (1282). Thirty years later, Henry VII. (of Luxemburg) led the German eagles back into Lombardy and Tuscany (1311). All who followed the fortunes of the new leader, all whom hatred to the French united together, acknowledged the appellation of Ghibelline as pertaining to them: they kept it, even when their ranks had been swelled by the multitude of the oppressed who groaned under the tyranny of the great lords, and who dreamed of the restoration of republican institutions.

Thus, during the course of a hundred years, the two magic words, Guelf and Ghibelline, had passed through no less than four distinct significations. Italy had borrowed them from the internal dissensions of Germany. They then became attached respectively, to the defenders of the priesthood and of the empire; they were later on reduced to playing an humbler role in the struggle of the communes against the feudal system; and finally again descended to become the designations of the imprudent allies of foreign domination. Unhappily for the Peninsula, this latter acceptation was the most lasting. Nothing can give a better idea of the disorder and terror attached to these names than can the fables by which the Italians accounted for their origin. They were said to have arisen from two demons, adored, each in its own temple, on separate heights in Sicily, whose votaries had declared implacable war against one another; they were two women who had been seen battling amid the clouds on the day of Manfred's birth; or, according to an opinion popular in Florence, they were the names of two dogs fighting in the public square, whose quarrel had been taken up by two bands of children, whence it had spread to the families of the children, to the whole city, to all Italy, to the entire world.[1]

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[1] Giacobo Malvagio, Saba Malaspina, Villani. In this brief summary of the history of Italy during the thirteenth century, we have followed, as guides, Dante himself, Villani, Guido Compagni, Macchiavelli, Sismonde Sismondi, and Raynaldus, the continuer of Baronius. For more complete information, an article in the *Universite Catholique* for October, 1838, may be consulted. The dispute between the priesthood and the empire was made the subject of an especial examination in a little work I may be pardoned for citing, notwithstanding its incompleteness, both as to matter and to form: *Deux Chanceliers d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1836); Part II., St. Thomas of Canterbury, reprinted in the *Œuvres completes*, t. VII.

II.

And now, if we wish to determine Dante's place amid the political commotions thus hastily sketched, a rapid examination of his actions and his writings will afford us the desired answer.

1. The future exile from Florence "still slept, a little lamb, within the fold of his native land" (he had scarcely reached his fourth year), when the imperial family of the Hohenstaufen became extinct in the person of Conradin (1268). The ancient rivalry between the princes of that house and the dukes of Bavaria could thenceforth be nothing more than a historical remembrance. The long-continued struggles between the monarchy and the papacy, having been fought out on the battle-field, were no longer agitated except in the chairs of canonists and jurisconsults. But, on the other hand, the two principles, the municipal and the feudal, as masters of the field, were rallying around them the Guelfs and the Ghibellines of Tuscany. Early a witness of these collisions, the young Alighieri naturally took part in them: he embraced the side of the people. That was the cause for which he bore arms at Campaldino; for it did he exercise the functions of ambassador to foreign parts while Giano della Bella endeavored to strengthen it by internal reforms. But the severity of that inflexible tribune repelled the nobility until then faithful to the standard of the Guelfs and sharing in the interest common to the whole city. A reaction in their favor occurred, and Giano della

Bella was banished (1294). Toward the same time, the inhabitants of Pistoja became involved in the dissensions dividing a powerful family of their city, and took sides under the appellations of *Neri* and *Bianchi* (Blacks and Whites). The leaders of the two parties, sent to Florence, carried to that place something yet lacking there, namely, new names for the new factions. The plebeians adopted white as their color, while black was the ensign of the patricians. The mediation of Cardinal Acquasparta, legate of Boniface VIII., effected nothing, by reason of the obstinacy of the seditious. Blood had already been shed when Dante was named one of the six priors to whom the government was entrusted during a period of two months (June 15, 1300). By his advice, the chiefs among the *Whites* and *Blacks* were sent off to the frontiers of the country. The former obtained a prompt recall; the latter, less favored, deputed one of their number to visit Rome, in order to set forth their claims. Dante was sent to the Holy See for the purpose of traversing these dangerous intrigues. But Boniface VIII. had already invited Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip the Fair, to retake Sicily, invaded by the Aragonese; he at the same time charged him with the task of reëstablishing, as he passed along, quiet throughout Italy, conferring the twofold title of Captain of the Church and Pacificator. Nov. 4, 1301, Charles of Valois made his solemn entry into Florence; but faithless to his glorious mission, he permitted the

Neri to enter with him, and with them came vengeance and disorder. The *Bianchi*, to the number of six hundred, were exiled; and two sentences, successively pronounced by a prevaricating judge, condemned Dante, as contumacious, to a fine of five thousand small florins, to banishment, and to death by fire should he re-enter Florence (Jan. 27, and March 10, 1302).[1]

These circumstances brought about a very remarkable change. The victors, champions of the nobility and deserters from the old party of the Guelfs, still retained the name of Guelf, which they justified by their alliance with the French princes. They, in fact, sought the friendship of Robert of Naples, received from him, on several occasions, help in money and in men (1308-

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[1] The second sentence of exile pronounced against Dante, long unpublished, was exhumed by Tiraboschi, vol. V. It is given entire in the appendix to this work, as a singular monument of political and literary barbarism. [The name of the Podestà who issued the two sentences was Cante de' Gabrielli d'Agobbio. The first sentence imposed the fine, and ordered that if it were not paid within three days, Dante's property was to be confiscated, and even if the fine were paid, he was still condemned to remain outside the province of Tuscany during two years. Whether he paid or not, he was pronounced a forger and bribe-taker, and hence disqualified from holding any office in the gift of the Commune of Florence. The second sentence takes note that Dante had not obeyed the summons to appear before the Podestà, nor had he paid the fine, whence he was condemned to be burned alive if ever he came within the jurisdiction of the City of Florence.—Tr. extracted from Scartazzini.]

1311), solicited his presence in their city (1304–1310), and finally conferred upon him, for five years, the honors of the seigniory (1313). The vanquished, on their side, obeying the inevitable sympathy which results from community in misfortune, joined with the vanquished of an earlier period, and were numbered in the ranks of the Ghibelline party, where, amid memories of the Empire and regrets for feudal institutions, the feeling of hatred toward France held a dominant place. Dante, in the beginning, followed the example of his companions in exile; he took part in their fruitless effort to obtain by force of arms the re-opening to them of the gates of their native city (1304). Then, wearied by their narrow views and their ill-conducted measures, he fell back into inaction, whence he emerged only when the emperor Henry VII. arrived on the scene (1310). He penned an eloquent manifesto in favor of that sovereign, and called upon him to turn his victorious arms against Florence:—an ever-deplorable document, which would have left an ineffaceable blot on the career of the poet had it not soon after been in a measure atoned for by a patriotic letter addressed by him to the cardinals, in which he sought to persuade them to elect an Italian pope (1314). During this period he passed from one house to another of the most distinguished defenders of the Ghibelline cause; he became the friend of Uguccione della Fagginola, of Malaspina de Lunigiana, of Can Grande della Scala. But the haughty ways of these powerful families sometimes rendered the hospitality received from them painful to him. He found life pleasanter under the roofs of two illustrious Guelfs, Pagano della Torre, Patriarch of Aquileia, and Guido Novello, Lord of Ravenna, in whose arms he finally expired. The affections of his later years were thus easily reknitted to the earliest predilections of his youth.[1]

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[1] Some historians have placed upon the Holy See the responsibility for the miseries that desolated Florence during the deplorable period we have just been considering. But, if we may judge of the policy of the popes by their acts, we cannot doubt the genuineness of their conciliatory intentions: we have only to examine the chronicle of Villani, who is not contradicted in this particular by any contemporary writer.—1273; Pope Gregory X. passes through Florence on his way to the Second Council of Lyons: he asks from the Guelfs a general amnesty in favor of the Ghibellines; on their refusal, he places the city under interdict.—1275; Renewed efforts on the part of the same pontiff for the re-establishing of peace.—1277; Nicholas III. sends Cardinal Latini to Tuscany, that the interrupted negotiations may be re-opened; a general reconciliation, admission of the Ghibellines to public offices.—1300; First legation of Cardinal Acquasparta, commissioned by Boniface VIII., to prevent the collisions between the Neri and the Bianchi.—1301; The same cardinal, for a second time legate of Boniface VIII., goes to Florence to allay the disorders accompanying the entrance of Charles of Valois.—1304; Benedict XI. confides to the Cardinal de Prato the care of bringing the exiled Bianchi back into their country: the cardinal is unable to overcome the obstinacy of the victorious faction, and pronounces against it the sentence of excommunication.—1307; Renewed and still unsuccessful mediation of Cardinal Napoleon Orsini, legate of Pope Clement V., etc., etc.—We quote the closing lines of the

2. These facts will receive full explanation if we compare them with the doctrines of which they are the outward expression. To begin with, Dante never gave to the house of Hohenstaufen the enthusiastic veneration with which it was regarded by its ancient partisans. He branded the emperor Frederic II. with the merited name of heretic, consigning him to eternal torments with his most noted accomplices, Cardinal Octavian, Pietro delle Vigne, Eccelino da Romano. It is true that he made himself the apologist of the Holy Empire; he became at once its historian, its jur-

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Pontifical letter conferring his second mission upon Cardinal Acquasparta: "To the end that these things may be accomplished more profitably and effectually, in peace and quiet, we are careful to appoint thee, in whose justice, goodness, circumspection, and mature experience we confide, to these duties, granting thee authority in that same our province: protected by thy favor, directed by thy counsel, and aided by thy maturity, the said Count of Valois may, with moderation and measure, more tranquilly and usefully discharge the office committed to him according to the divine precepts, and in conformity with the divine good pleasure and with ours. Wherefore we earnestly pray, admonish, and exhort thee, Brother, charging thee by the Apostolic commands, that, girding thyself wiftly, thou speed in person to those parts; . . . that thou address thyself and thy endeavors toward sowing the seed of charity and peace, so that the whirlwinds of wars and dissensions (which have exceedingly prevailed there) being appeased, that province, so sorely shaken by conflicts, may, as it were, after the darkness of night, behold the light of flowery [flourishing] days. . . ." [The reader must remember that the city was *Florence.*—TRANS.]

isconsult, and its theologian. But his doctrine was not that of the servile publicists; monarchy, as he understands it, is not the despotism of a military chief, the supreme representative of a systematic feudalism, uniting under his dominion all the countries once conquered by the German sword; it is a peaceable, civilizing, and universal sovereignty: instituted for the best interests of all, it preserves the liberty of each one, it rectifies such inequalities as tend to destroy the general level; and finally, it claims no rights over the interior court of conscience, nor over the internal constitution of the Church. On the contrary, the Church is recognized as a distinct power, divine in its origin, inviolable in its action; the priesthood and the empire (each independent of the other in its own sphere) are mutually subordinated, the one to the other, in their relations: the pontiff is the temporal vassal of Cæsar, but the emperor is of the spiritual flock of St. Peter. Thus, in the famous controversy which, during three hundred years, had occupied the minds and divided the opinions of doctors and statesmen, the philosopher-poet strove to fill the difficult part of conciliator.[1]

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[1] We are aware that he failed in his well-meant intention. The treatise *De Monarchia* was stricken by ecclesiastical censure. In fact, was not a system which established the absolute suzerainty of a prince in the temporal order, which freed him from all control, and made him responsible to no tribunal in this world, which denied to the pontiff the power of releasing subjects from their oaths of fealty, dangerous for all nations in times so near to those of Frederic II., and Philip the Fair?

Yet, when thus advocating the cause of the Empire, he attacked with fiery logic feudal privileges, the inheritability of offices, and even that of property. While he took a certain pleasure in mortifying the pride of the rising seigniories, he could not restrain the overflowing of filial love toward the free city which had proscribed him. But the city of his love was the old Florence, with the gravity of its government, the severe innocence of its manners, the peaceful and happy life led by its people; that was the ideal country whose dear image he kept in his heart amid the most distressful realities. He held in slight esteem the new men and the new institutions: the corruption of the old Florentine blood by the immigration of strangers, the intrusion of *parvenus* into the magistracy, the instability of the laws, the eagerness of the crowd to mingle in the conduct of public affairs;—all these conditions, inseparable from democracy, became to him subjects for ceaseless complaint and pitiless sarcasm. Himself the scion of a noble family, he kept in the depths of his soul a patrician turn of mind, the frequent expression of which in his poem contrasts singularly with the democratic doctrines set forth in his prose writings.[1] Finally, if he showed himself inimical to the French, it was for a reason which justifies him and honors us. He had well apprehended that distinctive trait in our national character, that bold-spirited effusiveness which in all times carried our arms and our ideas beyond the limits of our own borders, a trait menacing the political and the moral independence of our neighbors. He beheld, in the course of the thirteenth century, no less than five diadems—the crown of Jerusalem, of Constantinople, of England, of Sicily, and of Navarre—placed, with varying fortunes, upon the heads of our soldiers and our princes.[1] He was dismayed at the sight of so much glory, and held up to the mistrust of his contemporaries the royal race of Capet, "which was obstructing the whole world."[2] His jealous patriotism was more especially roused by undertakings which seemed to imperil Italian liberty, such as the conquest of Naples, the carrying off of Boniface VIII., and the removal of the Holy See beyond the Alps. If, in view of these repeated enterprises, he invoked the imperial power and greeted with applause the appearance of Henry VII., he never laid aside his horror of foreign domination; he had no intention of conferring upon the Germans rights refused to their rivals on the other side of the Rhine. He made no profession of any especial respect for that grave nation, and admired the gluttony of the Teuton as little as he did the vanity of the Gaul.[1]

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[1] See the beginning of Sect. II. of the present chapter, the whole of Book IV. of the Convito, and the following passages: Inferno, xv., 21; Purgatorio, vi., 44; Paradiso, xvi., 1, 17. We cannot agree with Foscolo (*La Comedia di Dante illustrata*) when he suggests that certain pages of the Convito, written amid the sorrows of exile, may have been intended to flatter the party of the Guelfs, in order to pave the way for a re-opening to Dante of the gates of his native city. The Canzone explained in Book iv. of the Convito, is a work of the poet's youth: the commentary was written between the years 1302 and 1308. Hence we see in it a serious conviction, twice set forth, under different forms.

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[1] Baldwin, Count of Flanders, Emperor of Constantinople (1204); John of Brienne, King of Jerusalem (1209); Louis VIII., called to the throne of England by the revolted barons (1215); Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily (1265); Philip the Fair, heir to the kingdom of Navarre (1284).

[2] Purgatorio, xx., 15.

But, faithful to his principles, he reverenced in the Emperor the head of the human race, not the chief of any isolated people, the King of the Romans, themselves the kings of the world, and hence the natural protector of Italy. This is why he invited him "to visit this garden of the Empire wasted by war, and to end the widowhood of the noble spouse who day and night weeps over his desertion."[2]

Thus, through his respect for the Church, through his philosophical attacks upon feudalism, Dante inclined toward the party of the Guelfs; the monarchical principles which he professed, and the enmity that he nourished against France, brought him into relations with the Ghibellines. But the effect of these two differing impulses was not to impel him now one way and now another, in two contrary directions: he followed, not without sundry deviations, but without pusillanimity, the mean line thence resulting. He did not wander, an irresolute deserter, between the two rival camps; he set up his tent on independent ground, not that he might repose in an indifferent neutrality, but that he might fight out the fight alone, with all the strength of his own individual genius. When the factions seemed to be drawing him in as a partaker in their turbulent movements, and to be making him a sharer in their crimes, he loudly protested against them; his stern words of blame fell, as blows from an untiring arm, alternately on the heads of the authors and of the companions of his exile, on the Neri and on the Bianchi, on the Ghibellines and on the Guelfs.[1] He had no fear of increasing the number of his enemies in the ranks of his contemporaries, provided he might keep his name pure from every humiliating alliance in the eyes of posterity. Posterity long ago falsified this his legitimate hope. But the present progress of historical studies now leaves vulgar prejudices without excuse. The hour has come to restore to the old Alighieri the wished for testimony which he caused his ancestor, Cacciaguida, to render to him in the remarkable interview described in the Paradiso, namely, that he never confounded his cause with that of an impious race of men, and that he could claim the glory of being himself alone his own party.[2]

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[1] Inferno, xvii., 7; xxix., 41.

[2] Purgatorio, vi., 33, 38.

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[1] Paradiso, vi., 34; xvii., 31.

[2] Paradiso, xvii., 33. L.

Thou shalt abandon every thing beloved
  Most tenderly, and this the arrow is
  Which first the bow of banishment shoots forth.
Thou shalt have proof how savoureth of salt
  The bread of others, and how hard a road
  The going down and up another's stairs.

II.—Beatrice.

Influence of Women in Christian Society, and of Catholic Symbolism in the Arts.—St. Lucy.—The Blessed Virgin.

THE personality of Beatrice has much exercised the penetrative powers of biographers and commentators. For some, she is simply a young girl loved with a human love, and taking her place amid the throng of such graceful personages celebrated in elegiac song in every country and in every age. For others, she is an allegorical creation, presenting under a visible form an abstract idea, which following different interpretations, might be Theology, Grace, or Liberty. Others again attribute to the beautiful

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And which most shall weigh upon thy shoulders
  Will be the bad and foolish company
  With which into this valley thou shalt fall;
For all ingrate, all mad and impious
  Will they become against thee; but soon after
  They, and not thou, shall have the forehead scarlet.
Of their bestiality their own proceedings
  Shall furnish proof; so 'twill be well for thee
  A party to have made thee by thyself.

Florentine a double role, real in the life of the poet, and figurative in the structure of the poem. Ourselves holding to this last mentioned view, we have thus far only partially indicated the proofs supporting our opinion: we must now set these forth more largely, and look at them in relation to some general considerations which may perhaps throw a new light upon them. Thus, a brief examination into the influence accorded to women in Christian society will enable us to understand what Beatrice may have been to Dante; and, on the other hand, a rapid review of the resources which the Arts found in Catholic theology, will readily permit us to divine what Dante could do for Beatrice.

I.

1. The condition of woman in the ancient world seemed closely connected with a primitive tradition, contained in the records of China and Greece as well as in those of Judea: *That the companion of man had become his temptress, and that through her, evil had entered into the world.* The anathema naturally fell the more heavily on the head of her who had called it forth. She was then excluded from the ranks of civil society, the laws of which declared her stricken with a perpetual incapacity, consigned to the lowest rank in the family, degraded in her own person by imprisonment, polygamy, and divorce, and reduced to the condition of being no more than the slave and the chattel of man. When she sought to free herself from the pressure of this harsh destiny,

when she flung open the doors of the household prison, when by the publicity of her charms she endeavored in her turn to subjugate warriors, philosophers, and artists, she only succeeded in making them sharers in her degradation; when she had become the mistress, she found in this name merely another species of shame: men then called her Helen, Aspasia, or Phryne. Between servitude and this blameworthy empire, there was no refuge for her except in the shadow of the temple, under the veil of virginity, among the priestesses and vestals; and who can say if some traditional memory was not even there preserved of the oracle which had announced the intervention of a virgin in the redemption of the world?

In fact, as Christianity, through the doctrine of the Incarnation, rehabilitated the whole human race, so, by that of the divine maternity, did it lift woman from her own especial degradation. While it did not destroy for her any more than for man the material consequences of the Fall, it did make good its disastrous moral results. In religion, it was impossible not to recognize as a fact, the inequality of the sexes, but the equality of souls was duly professed. The daughters of Eve were deemed too fragile to bear the burden of the priesthood, but they shared in the power of prayer and in the respect due to virtue. Saintly women received the honors of canonization, and pontiffs, amid all the splendors of a solemn liturgy, bent the knee in presence of their effigies. In civil life, they continued outside of the cares and perils attendant upon power, but they enjoyed civil liberty. They moulded manners, which are of greater weight than laws. They held the initiative in education, on which depends the future of any people; to them was committed the sacred magistracy of alms: their domain included childhood, sorrow, and poverty, that is to say, the largest part of all human things. Similar changes took place within the family circle. The mother sat among her children, a queen beside the home hearth; the wife exercised a pious apostolate in regard to her husband; sisters became the guardian angels of their brothers. Down to any depths of isolation to which misfortune or penitence might condemn these frail beings, they preserved not only their personal dignity, but even, so to speak, their social rank. They could call by the sweet name of son the new-born babe whom they bore in their arms to the laver of baptism. They found in the priest a father who stood ready to wipe away their tears. Faith united them by the bonds of a real fraternity, by an unceasing intercommunion, with millions of fellow-Christians.

One might say that thenceforth nothing great was to be accomplished within the bosom of the Church without some woman participating in the deed. First, many of them stood as martyrs in the amphitheatres; others shared with the anchorites the possession of the desert. Ere long, Constantine set up the Labarum at the Capitol, and St. Helena planted the cross on the ruins of Jerusalem. Clovis at Tolbiac invoked the God of Clotilda. Meantime, the tears of Monica were redeeming the errors of Augustine; Jerome was dedicating the Vulgate to the piety of two Roman ladies, Paula and Eustochium; St. Basil and St. Benedict. the first legislators of the cenobitic life in the East and in the West, were being aided by their sisters, Macrina, and Scholastica. Later, the Countess Matilda upholds with her chaste hands the tottering throne of Gregory VII.; the wisdom of Queen Blanche is felt throughout the reign of St. Louis; Joan of Arc saves France; Isabella of Castile presides over the discovery of a new world. Finally, in times nearer to our own, we see St. Theresa standing amid the group of bishops, doctors, and founders of orders, by whom the internal reform of Catholic society was accomplished: St. Francis de Sales cultivates the soul of Madame de Chantal as a most precious flower, and St. Vincent de Paul entrusts Louise de Marillac with the most admirable of his designs, the establishment of the Daughters of Charity.

2. Thus far, we have considered the influence of Christian women as exercised in spheres above all suspicion, within the inflexible circle of duty. We are now to watch its development under forms less austere, modified by the requirements of surrounding conditions, and even sometimes lending itself to the exigencies of human passions that it may direct their perilous impulses.

We readily recognize something akin to this in the chivalric usages of the Middle Ages, before such usages had degenerated into mere profane gallantry. Chivalry was originally a sacred institution, an order exacting from its members solemn vows and numerous observances. In return, they received the mission of waging war; they became the ministers in this world of the God of battles; they were called upon to realize among the still untamed peoples the eternal idea of Good. Guardians of every kind of helplessness, they protected those needing their aid with a zeal proportioned to the touching nature of the claims made upon them, succoring the despoiled widow, the betrayed wife, the orphan exposed to the violence of an unjust lord, the accused whose innocence demanded a champion. Among these fair clients, there was often one who attracted the especial preference of the knight. Sometimes it was an illustrious princess toward whom he dared not lift his eyes, sometimes an unknown dame whose name he never learned: then a look, a smile, paid the entire reward due to his long continued service. And yet this respectful tenderness, a feeling so delicate that we should profane it were we to bestow upon it any other name, exerted a powerful influence over the heart. Doubtless, it could not altogether renovate the wild blood still coursing through the veins of the knight, but it could moderate its effervescence. Military pride voluntarily humbled itself; the career of arms became ennobled through the adoption of a disinterested motive; sensual instincts were dispelled at the call of honor—honor, that manly modesty which forbade a brave man to commit any action that could call a blush to the countenance of his lady. It was not in vain that he proclaimed her the queen of his thoughts; ever present to his mind, she often caused him to triumph over himself, and hence still more easily over his enemies. More than one noble *chatelaine* thus even from the seclusion of her oratory contributed to the maintenance of discipline in the camp, perhaps to the attaining of victory on the battle-field.

But chivalry may also be regarded as a public institution; it formed the first step in the feudal hierarchy. From this point of view, it enjoyed in Italy but a doubtful popularity. When in various cities a decree of ostracism was pronounced against the families of the nobility, this name embraced all that counted a knight as a member. Amid the common equality, the sole personal distinction to which the ambition of the citizen could aspire, the only national glory looked upon as the especial appanage of Italy among the peoples of Europe, was the glory pertaining to the Arts. Art thus became for those who faithfully devoted themselves to its service, an august ministry: their mission was to seek, amid the chaos of fallen nature, the scattered remains of the primal design, then to reproduce these in new works, to grasp and to express the divine idea of the Beautiful. Now, among the works of God, there was one that seemed to crown all the rest, the one that embellished the solitude of Eden and ravished the father of the race at his first awaking from slumber. The marvellous attraction experienced by him has not ceased to be felt in the souls of his sons. But the common herd of men appreciate beauty chiefly on its sensuous side; they approach it only in transitory unions, whence issues a posterity destined to die. The artist, on the contrary, beholds it on its intelligible side; he perceives mirrored in it a ray from on high; he pursues and possesses it by contemplation; in his fruitful ecstasy, he engenders immortal productions. To this has been given the name of Platonic love. Plato set forth its theory in the books of the Phædrus and the Banquet. But the perversity of the pagan world did not allow of the application of such doctrines. Catholic society in the thirteenth century offered more favorable conditions. Already, from the banks of the Adige to the pharos of Messina, rose a concert of poetic voices. Amid the hills of Umbria, St. Francis of Assisi improvised hymns, wherein his ardent charity overflowed down even to the humblest creatures. The Blessed Jacopone de Todi composed religious canticles in prison. Outside of the cloister, a larger liberty authorized Guittone of Arezzo to sing by turns the Queen of Angels and the daughters of men. Guido Cavalcante wrote the famous *canzone* defining the nature of love, the completely philosophic thought of which attracted the attention of the doctors. The rhymes of Dante de Majano took captive the heart of Mina, the Sicilian, whom he never saw. The star of Petrarch was soon to rise. Such was the epoch which gave birth to the narration we are about to read—the beginning of the *Vita Nuova*, the first work of Dante, the preface, perhaps, to the Divine Comedy.

3. "Already nine times since my birth had the heaven of light accomplished its revolution on itself, when there appeared to my eyes the glorious lady of my thoughts, who was called Beatrice by many who knew not wherefore she was so called. Since she had existed in this life, the starry heaven had passed over from west to east the twelfth part of a degree, so that I beheld her about the beginning of her ninth year, and toward the close of mine. She appeared to me garbed in a most noble color, a modest and becoming red, and girdled and adorned as befitted her youthful age. At that moment, I say truly that the spirit of life which dwells in the most secret chamber of the heart, began to tremble with such violence that it appeared fearfully in the least pulses, and trembling said these words: *Behold a god stronger than I, who has come to rule over me.* At the same instant, the intellectual spirit, which dwells in the high chamber whereto the spirits of the senses carry all their perceptions, was stricken with wonder, and, addressing himself to the spirits of sight, said: *Now has your beatitude appeared.* However, the natural spirit,

which dwells in that part where our nourishment is supplied, began to weep, and weeping said these words: *Woe is me! for I shall henceforth be often troubled.* From that hour, Love was master of my soul, which had so suddenly inclined to him; and he began to exercise over me such control and such lordship, through the power that my imagination gave to him, that it behooved me to do completely all his pleasure. He commanded me oftimes that I should seek to see this youthful angel, so that I in my boyhood often went seeking her, and saw her of such noble and praiseworthy deportment, that truly of her might be said that word of the poet Homer: 'She seemeth not the daughter of mortal man, but of God.' And albeit her image, which stayed constantly with me, gave boldness to Love to hold lordship over me, yet it was of such noble virtue that it never suffered that Love should rule me without the faithful counsel of the Reason in those matters in which it were useful to hear such counsel." [1]

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[1] The erudite expressions so prodigally employed in this first page of the *Vita Nuova*, cannot be regarded as a mere display of useless learning. On the contrary, we find in them the mystic sense which the poet attached to the emotions of his childhood, his anxious care to avoid every suggestion of an ordinary passion, in fine, his desire to render most solemn the first appearance of Beatrice. On the other hand, in presence of so many precise indications, it becomes impossible to reduce her who bears this name to the exclusive role of an abstract idea. An abstract idea nine years old! Theology scarcely yet ready to throw aside its swaddling bands in the thirteenth century of the Christian era! Boccaccio (*Vita di Dante*) relates the meeting of the two children, and Benvenuto da Imola recalls

Beginning from that day, May 1st, 1274, Dante continues the history of his interior life, and permits us to be present at the simultaneous development of his conscience and his genius. Beatrice was for him a type of perfection, a something celestial to which he must attain by disengaging himself from the slime of vicious inclinations, and by tending upward through the sustained effort of an indefatigable will. Still a child, a secret voice called upon him often to visit the neighboring house, wherein the young girl was growing up, and whence he returned always better and better. Later, at the age when the passions assert their power, amid the temptations natural to a fiery temperament, surrounded by undisciplined youths who rarely hesitated at the shedding of blood, it was quite enough that he should have seen,

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its main features: " When a certain Falco Portinari, an honorable citizen of Florence, according to custom made an entertainment celebrating the Kalends of May, having invited his neighbors with their dames, Dante, then a boy of nine years old, accompanied his father, Alighieri, who was one of the numerous company. He (Dante) saw at the house among other young girls, a child, the daughter of the said Falco, aged eight years, a wonder of beauty, but of still greater excellence. This wonder suddenly penetrated into his heart in such a way that it never departed thence so long as life endured, whether from conformity of disposition and behavior, or through some special influence of the heavens. And with his years continually increased the flames of love; whence Dante, wholly given up to her image, followed her whithersoever she went, believing that in her eyes he beheld the sovereign beatitude." The name of Falco Portinari is inscribed among those of the benefactors of the hospital, Santa Maria Novella, on a stone tablet still preserved within that fine building.

even from afar, the pious countenance of his beloved, to render him incapable of evil, to restore to him the energy of well-doing. She appeared to him among her young companions as an immortal being descended from on high to endue with honor the weakness of women here below and to protect their virtue.

When she knelt at the foot of the altar, he beheld her, crowned with an aureole, associated with the power of the blessed in heaven, interceding for sinners; and he felt prayer more readily and more confidently flow from his own lips. But, when he stood by the way, awaiting her return, and received from her the kindly greeting of Christian fraternity, he alone is capable of expressing what he then felt. "As soon as she appeared, a sudden flame of charity was enkindled within me, which made me pardon all and have no more enemies. When she was about to salute me, a spirit of love annihilated for the moment all the other sensitive spirits, leaving strength to those of sight alone, and saying to them: *Go and honor your sovereign!* And one who wished to know what it is to love, would have learned it by seeing all my limbs tremble. Then, at the moment when that noble lady bowed her head to greet me, nothing could veil the dazzling brightness which filled my sight; I stood as if stricken by an unendurable beatitude. ... So that in that alone was found the last end of all my desires; in that alone rested my happiness, a happiness far surpassing the capacity of my soul." Moreover, this impression was so vivid and so disinterested, that Dante fancied it shared by many others, and rejoiced that it should be so. "When the noble Lady walked through the streets of the city, people ran to see her pass, which gave me great joy; and those whom she came near were seized by so respectful a feeling that they did not dare to lift their eyes. She, wrapping herself in her humility as in a veil, passed on without seeming affected by what the crowd said and did. And when she had gone by, some cried out as they walked away, 'This is no woman, but one of the fairest angels from heaven.' 'A miracle,' answered others, 'Blessed be God, who can fashion such admirable works!'"

But the will cannot take so high a flight without carrying the understanding along with it: the affections cannot become ennobled without a corresponding enrichment of ideas; the transport of the understanding and the plentitude of ideas are manifested in the fecundity of the word. Thus the potent charm which held dominion over the mind of Dante did not hold him in a blind captivity. The remembrance of Beatrice illumined his vigils, encouraged his labors, and did not drive from his memory the learned lessons of Brunetto Latini.

He delivered from the latter the elements of the arts and sciences; from the former he received the inspiration which vivifies and holds them in mutual relation. Between the grave secretary of the republic and the gentle daughter of Portinari, the predestined youth had no difficulty in entering upon the path that leads to fame. At the age of eighteen, the need of communicating his secret emotions to a small number of friends led him to pen his earliest verses, which were followed by a long series of sonnets, canzoni, sirvente, and ballads—the ever more vivid outpouring of his chaste love, and more brilliant fore-shadowing of his poetic future. At first there appeared enigmas and plays upon words, strange dreams whose meaning was to be guessed; sixty names gathered together in a single sirvente, so that the chosen one might be placed there without fear of betrayal; aimless hopes and motiveless alarms. All this was the childish shame-facedness of a new-born passion and of a novice in the art of writing. Soon, to the fear of profane interpretation was added the impatience to be understood: then came allusions, veiled but not concealed; circumstances adroitly used; words of joy and harmonious sighs corresponding to all the joys and all the sorrows of the beloved; confidences prepared from afar off and half withheld. The thought and the expression become more and more refined; they acquire a virginal grace and delicacy. Finally, the feeling once so timid, now tried by experience and reflection, sure of its own legitimacy, is ready to brave the light of day. For her whom he so long honored by a secret veneration, Dante is about to prepare a public triumph, and henceforth nothing will be too precious for him to use to this end; he will count neither the boldness of the forms selected nor the abundance of his figures, the contrast of coloring nor the difficulties of rhyme and rhythm. We here recognize the virile genius whom the capricious language of Italy is to obey, to whose work "heaven and earth will lend a hand." The following fragment marks, so to speak, the transition from the second to the third manner, perhaps the most interesting moment in the poet's history:

"Ladies who have intelligence of love,
With you of my lo̊ved lady I would speak;
Not vainly thinking to exhaust her praise,
But in discoursing to relieve my mind.
I say that in reflecting on her worth,
Love's inspiration is so sweetly felt,
That, if my courage did not fail me then,
The world should be enamor'd by my words.

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An angel in the dialect divine
Exclaims, and says: Sire, in the world is seen
A miracle in action, which proceeds
From a fair soul whose splendor mounts thus high.
Heaven, that no want had ever known but her,
Entreats to have her presence of its Lord,
And every saint aloud implores the grace.
Pity alone opposes our request.
What is Madonna's doom? What God's decree?
My well-beloved, suffer now in peace
That, while my pleasure is, your hope should stay

Where there is one who must abide her loss,
And who shall say to the condemn'd in hell,
The hope of blessed spirits I have seen
Madonna is in highest heaven desired:
Now will I tell you of her excellence.
I say then that the lady who would show
True gentleness should walk with her; for when
She moves, Love casts o'er vulgar hearts a chill,
Which freezes and destroys their every thought;
And he whom Love permits to see her long,
A thing ennobled will become, or die;
And when one finds that he may worthy be
To look on her, his virtue thus is proved;
For he receives the gift, conferring health,
And humbleth him till he forgets all wrong.
And God hath given her for greater grace,
That who hath spoke with her cannot end ill."[1]

The mournful presentiments blended with these transports were speedily to be justified. "The Lord called to Himself this young saint; He was minded to make her shine in glory, under the ensigns of the august Queen, Mary, whose name she had always revered." Beatrice died on the ninth day of June, in the year of Our Lord, 1292. How then relate the grief of the poet, when, in the bewilderment of his thoughts, he wrote to all the princes of the earth to notify them of this loss, as of a presage menacing the future of the world; when his eyes, inexhaustible fountains of tears, seemed to him no longer anything but "two desires of weeping"? And yet, when time had lightened the sombre memories of the bed of death and the sepulchre, and the tokens of mourning had passed out of sight, she whom Dante had loved lived on in his memory, radiant, immortal, more beautiful than ever, more than ever potent. She lived for him a second life, she brought to him light and inspiration.[1] From that hour, the songs that had been interrupted began again: now she was extolled as having left without regret the state of exile of this world that she might enter into the abode of eternal peace; then the song would commemorate the anniversary of the day when she was placed by the side of the Blessed Virgin in that portion of heaven peopled by the humble; and again, she would be represented as seen amid the topmost heights of the Empyrean, receiving unexampled honors.[2]

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[1] The New Life, Canzone I. [English translation of Charles Lyell, A. M., with the exception of a few lines bettered by that of C. Eliot Norton, and by the use of a suggestion of Fraticelli's.—Tr.].

But these fugitive preludes announced a greater work: a marvellous apparition suggested the design of it; and with this ends the *Vita Nuova.* "After having written the verses that have been cited, I was visited by an admirable vision, in which I was permitted to contemplate such matters that I determined to speak no more of that blessed one until the time came when I could speak more worthily of her; I am now making every effort to fulfil my intention, as she truly knows. If then it may please Him for whom and through whom all creatures exist, to grant me a few more years of life, I hope to say of her that which has never been said of any other; and when my task shall be completed, may it please Him who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to rejoice in the glory of my well-beloved, of that blessed Beatrice who in glory looks upon the face of Him, who is Blessed forever and ever!" [1]

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[1] Convito, ii., 2: "That blessed Beatrice, who lives in heaven with the angels, and on the earth with my soul."

[2] See the Canzone: "The eyes that grieve," and the Sonnets: "The gentle lady to my mind had come;" "Beyond the sphere," C. E. Norton's Tr.

From this simple exposition may doubtless be inferred the real, historical existence of Beatrice and the purity of the love which she inspired; but we may also perceive a new and entirely poetic era beginning in regard to her, the first glimmerings of her apotheosis. The vision is to receive its explanation, and we are to see what art, aided by Christianity, can do in the way of glorifying human nature.

II.

1. And here we must revert to the origin of Christian symbol-

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[1] The New Life. The preceding pages are merely a brief but faithful analysis of that work.

ism, traces of which we have already frequently indicated.[1] Ancient philosophy had attempted, but unsuccessfully, to solve a difficult problem, namely, to reconcile and unite the two principles of knowledge and existence—the Ideal and the Real. The Platonists recognized the existence of ideas, but went astray in futile efforts to give them an independent life: they were led to deify the abstractions they had dreamed of: thence the paganism of Plotinus and Proclus. The Peripatetics stopped at the study of realities; but they spent themselves in vain labors to bring these into categories which often had no value but a logical or a purely arbitrary one: they left science exposed to the danger of materialism. The theology of the Fathers decided the question by the light of faith, permitting some philosophical difficulties still to subsist, which difficulties were subsequently taken up by the schools. Theology showed the real and the ideal blended from the beginning in the primal Unity, and thence finding themselves united in every step of creation, in every phase of history. In fact, the eternal Word is the word that God utters to Himself, the image which He engenders, the infinite idea which He conceives. It is at the same time a distinct Reality, a divine Person. What the Word is in Himself, He reflects in His works. Thus, all created beings have a substance which is proper to them, an incommunicable essence; they cannot be reduced, as they are by oriental pantheism, to mere phantoms and shadows: and yet we read in their visible forms the invisible thoughts of their Author; nature is a living language. In the same way, the inspired writings contain doctrines typified by actions, truths personified under the names of men; the whole of revelation is developed in a series of events which are signs. Thence the system of interpretation which passed from the Synagogue to the Church, from St. Paul to St. Augustine, and from St. Augustine to St. Thomas, a system attributing to the sacred books two senses, one literal and the other mystical.[1] The mystical sense was still further subdivided according as it related to the coming of Christ, to the future life, or to the divers states of the soul in its present condition. The philosophers of the Middle Ages found types on every page of the Bible to define, to depict, and to animate their most abstract conceptions; we see a striking example of this in the treatise of Richard of St. Victor, *de Præparatione ad contemplationem*, where the family of Jacob is taken to symbolize the family of the human faculties. Rachel and Lia there fill the roles of the intellect and the will; the two sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin, are in their turn taken to represent the two main operations of the intellect, namely, knowledge and contemplation. One would scarcely believe with what subtlety and charm the relations of the objects compared are pursued down to their last terms.[1]

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[1] See above, Part I., Chap. iv.

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[1] St. Paul, I. Corinth., x.; Galat., iv.; Hebr., x.—St. Peter, 1, 3.—Origen, *de Principiis*, 4.—St. Jerome, *in Oseam.*, 2.—Cassian, *Collat.*, 14, 4.—St. Augustine, *de Utilitate credendi*, 3.—St. Eucher, *Liber formularum.*—St. Thomas, *Summa*, pars q. 1, art. 10; *Quodlibeta*, 7, art. 16.

This twofold function, historical and allegorical, attributed to the personages of the Old Testament, was still better suited to the saints of the New Law. A saint, in the eyes of faith, is a great man; that is to say, he reproduces heroically in his own person some of the most excellent atributes pertaining to humanity: he has banished from his heart selfish affections, egotistic passions, that their place may be occupied by qualities that are of all times and all places, justice, charity, wisdom. In him, the *me* is effaced in presence of the moral idea to the honoring of which he has devoted his life; he becomes the example of that idea, and consequently its type. But the saints in heaven are not merely abiding types offered to the admiration of the world; they intervene in its fortunes by means of a mysterious power known under the name of *patronage.* Patronage is not limited to a simple individual relation determined by a baptismal name selected at will; it is exercised on a much larger scale and according to more certain laws. Families, cities, kingdoms, have glorious mediators, who are of their blood or have been chosen through gratitude; during many ages, the orders in the state, learned societies, corporations of artisans, lovingly celebrated those who had sanctified their especial class of life or labor. Every condition and every age still has its privileged intercessors. There are places protected by a revered memory; every day in the year is placed under some invocation which consecrates it. The saints also divide among them the influencing of consciences: some of them are presumed to be mainly interested in the virtues wherein they most excelled; others take pity on the frailties from which they themselves were not always exempt; there are consolers for all afflictions, guardians against every peril; there are pious guides for every species of study, for every exercise of genius.[1] So that these elect of God represent every condition of human nature; they represent such conditions, not merely under favor of a simple association of ideas, but in virtue of a special power which constitutes a portion of their glory and their felicity. It would take us too long here to dwell upon the beautiful harmonies suggested by the choice of the patron saints dearest to Catholic piety. It will suffice to instance St. Louis, who has become the figure of Christian royalty; St. Joseph, who honors laborious poverty; St.

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[1] Thus, in the ecstasy of contemplation, the conscious intellect evanishes: this is Rachel dying in the act of giving birth to Benjamin. *De Præparatione animæ ad contemplationem*, cap. liv.

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[1] See the last chapter of the Life of Saint Elisabeth, by Montalembert.

John the Baptist, typifying innocence, and St. Mary Magdalen, repentance; painting and music glorified under the names of St. Luke and St. Cecilia; St. Catherine chosen to personify philosophy. It was certainly a graceful thought which for this ministry gave to a virgin martyr the preference over so many illustrious doctors. It would seem as if there must have been an intention of softening the asperity of the scholastics, of abasing their pride, and of confirming their faith, when they were given for their patroness a young girl of Alexandria, who had confounded the learning of the pagan sophists, and who, after defending the Gospel in the Museum, had confessed it under the torments of martyrdom.

Thus, in theology, each thing has its objective value and its represențive value; everything is positive, and everything is figurative; realities and ideas meet at all points, and this relationship constitutes symbolism.[1] It is easy to see what help the arts must derive from such relationship. In truth, the fate of the arts depends entirely on the problem indicated above. If they abandon themselves to the pursuit of an ideal model which has no existence here below, they degenerate into mathematical processes, into superstitious rules, the application of which can produce nothing but delusive beauties. If they give themselves up to mere imitation of actual objects, they will lose their way amid the disorder infecting nature, they will justify its deformities by whimsical theories, of which the result will be the rehabilitation of ugliness. They must learn to recognize the eternal types of the beautiful amid the living multitude of creatures, and recompose, according to its imperfect imprints, the characters of the divine seal: they must make mind apparent under the veil of matter, and thought illumine the creation of the artist. Christian symbolism reveals to the arts the secret of such a result; it does more; it furnishes them with admirable subjects whereon to ex-

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[1] Thence, in our opinion, results the unlawfulness of two historical methods, one opposed to the other, and either one followed by numerous partisans. The first, attaching itself to the literal sense of books and the commemorative character of monuments, refuses to see in these any ulterior signification; its adherents argue from the reality against the symbol: the *Evhemerists* of all ages have thus reasoned. The second fastens upon the poetic side of traditions, the moral scope of works of art; it interprets astronomical myths and religious dogmas as contained in the narrations of the ancient world; but in return it denies to them their positive value as actual facts: those who adopt this method argue from the

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symbol against the reality; such is, for example, the entire polemical system of Strauss as against Christianity. Now both these methods begin with a vicious circle, since the two elements whose incompatibility they assume, to wit, the ideal and the real, on the contrary, form by their union the essence of true symbolism. The robust intelligence of the men of yore readily admitted the presence of two conceptions under one and the same sign. Our analytic habits of thought scarcely allow us fully to grasp either one—like the degenerate heroes described in the Iliad, who could no longer lift, without great effort, even the half part of the heavy rocks which had been as playthings to their fathers.

ercise their powers. In the early days of the Christian era, painting, called in to console the sadness of the catacombs, borrows from the sacred Scriptures, and reproduces with pious prodigality, figures of resignation and of hope. Noah in the ark, on the surging waters, signifies faith sure of its future amid the bloody deluge of persecutions; Job, on the dunghill, preaches patience; Daniel among the lions, is the man of desires overcoming by prayer the powers of evil; Elias, borne upward in the fiery chariot, foreshadows the triumph of the martyrs. The multiplying of the loaves, the Samaritan woman at the well, the healing of the paralytic and the blind, foretoken the propagation of the sacred word, the healing of the Gentiles, the moral and intellectual regeneration of the world.[1] Eleven hundred years later, when the Church celebrates her triumph in the places where of old she wept her captivity, the arts, reassembled in Rome, execute the monumental decorations which there seem to keep endless festival. Then, in the palace of the successors of St. Peter, Raphael designs a series of wonderful pictures which in a few pages contain the grand thesis of the papacy, a thesis so long in debate, then triumphant, but soon again to be delivered over by Luther to new disputes. The *Deliverance of the Prince of the Apostles*, the *Punishment of Heliodorus*, *Leo the Great staying the progress of the*

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[1] See Bosio, d'Agincourt, and *Cours d'hiéroglyphique chrétienne*, by M. Cyprien Robert, in the *Université Catholique*, vol. vii., page 198.

Huns, the *Miracle of Bolsena*, are so many magnificent chapters, wherein are set forth the divine mission of the sovereign pontificate, the sacredness of its character, the invincible power of its action, the infallibility of its most mysterious teachings. We see all the sciences and all the arts called into its service in the admirable confronting of the School of Athens with the *Disputa* of the Blessed Sacrament, of Justinian with Gregory IX. Every abstract idea made use of is shown under real forms: philosophy is figured by its noblest disciples, jurisprudence by the most famous legislators, theology by its confessors and its Fathers:—stay a moment, I ought to say that theology is seen there also depicted under the lineaments of a woman. But that woman, easily recognizable by the garb she wears, is the same whom we find appearing in the vision of Dante; she is Beatrice.[1]

2. The vision of Dante (referred to in the Vita Nuova), whether it really occupied one of his weary nights, or whether it was merely the result of his poetical invention, doubtless unveiled to him strange wonders, since he felt a certain pity for his earlier songs, and announced as about to appear, imaginings unexampled before his day. And yet, he had more than once represented Beatrice amid the glories of Paradise: it is indeed a pleasant and easy illusion to figure a triumph in heaven in honor of those

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[1] In the *Stanze* of Raphael, frequent allusions to contemporary events are discoverable; but they are by no means out of keeping with the deeper meanings we have indicated.

whose loss we are mourning on earth. Poets especially have never been chary in awarding divine honors; in olden days, they consecrated the locks of Berenice, and since then they have canonized many a memory not above suspicion. It was then altogether necessary that in this latest apparition the fair Florentine should appear embellished with new attributes distinguishing her from the ordinary crowd of saintly women: for her, the usual palm and crown were not enough; she was to obtain an exalted rank in the hierarchy of the elect, an ample share in the empire granted to them over terrestrial things We have seen that the piety of the Middle Ages took pleasure in selecting the most graceful figures to fill the most austere roles; we know what parts were assigned to Benjamin and St. Catherine. Dante was no stranger to this tendency of his times, if we may be permitted to judge from some passages in the Convito (ii., 2, 13), where he comments upon the Canzone: "Ye who comprehending move the third heaven." In the literal sense, he naively confesses that after the death of his well-beloved, the daily sight of his tears seemed to touch a young neighbor, whose compassion was not devoid of charm for him, perhaps indeed, not devoid of peril. In the allegorical sense, it was philosophy which alone consoled the bereavement of his youth. And he fancied (he said) philosophy made in the image of a noble lady with a compassionate countenance; luminous demonstrations were her looks, and the persuasion accompanying discourse, an enchanting smile (iii., 15). If then his imagination, certainly very accommodating, had gone so far as to confound the loftiest of human sciences with the beautiful unknown who had filled but a fleeting and subaltern place in his thoughts, what remained for her who always occupied "the citadel of his soul"? What was left to reach his end except to liken her to the divine science? Sundry circumstances, each one heightening the other, tended to give color to this association of ideas. With a little superstition (and what is more superstitious than love?), it was easy to find many mysteries in the personality of Beatrice. First there was the mystery of numbers. Dante met her at the age of nine years, sang her praises at the age of eighteen, and lost her at the age of twenty-seven; as the difference between their ages amounted to but a few months, this fact bore a double significance. The number nine was everywhere to be met with; and, if need were, a little collusion could be employed to aid the coincidence.[1]

But nine is the square of three, and three is the number of the Divine Persons. The destiny over which that number presided seemed a peculiar manifestation of the Holy Trinity.

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[1] Thus, in the Sirvente containing the sixty names, to which allusion was made above, that of Beatrice was placed the ninth. Thus also, the month of June, in which she died, was the ninth month in the Judaic year.—See the New Life, *passim*.

Then there was the mystery of the name, an important consideration of that epoch, and one which hagiographers rarely neglected. Beatrice signifies, "she who gives happiness." Now, the sovereign happiness, vainly sought by all the schools of antique wisdom, is found only by the light of the holy teaching which came down after the lapse of four thousand years to regenerate the earth. And finally, there was the mystery of the ascendency obtained without effort over the mind and heart of the poet, over his studies and his moral nature. She was for him an image of religion, which is at the same time heat and light, purifying as well as illuminating. The beneficent influence of Beatrice so happily felt by himself and believed by him to have affected all those among whom she lived, was now consecrated by death, and seemed as if it must still continue to be exercised, but upon a wider circle, thus being transformed into a veritable *patronage*. It is hence easy to conceive how, taking seriously the analogies we have just pointed out, he had made of the mystical daughter of Portinari the patroness, and consequently, the figure, of Theology.

These suppositions are verified, and the wonderful vision seems to be set forth, in the last five cantos of the Purgatorio. There is unfolded a scene already described by us, of which we shall here recall only the main features. Following the twenty-four Ancients of the Old Testament, and surrounded by the four Evangelists, represented by the four animals, a Griffon, the emblem of Christ, draws the car of the Church: the remaining writers of the New Testament follow, and the seven Virtues complete the procession. On the car, a lady appears; she names herself: she is indeed Beatrice; the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova*, which she calls to mind; the same who once wore lineaments so fair, and who so early changed them for an ideal, incorruptible beauty.[1] But may we not discover in her something still higher, when we see her girt with the olive branch of wisdom, wearing the white veil of Faith, the green mantle of Hope, the flaming tunic of Charity; when in her eyes the two forms of the Griffon are, each in turn, reflected; when the Cardinal Virtues are given her as forerunners, and the Theological Virtues alone give permission to contemplate her face to face; when finally, the inspired Ancients sing her praises, and one of them salutes her three times with these words: *Veni sponsa de Libano?* Doubtless, there can be little temerity in recognizing under these signs the science which teaches men to love, to trust. to believe; and whose doctrines all lead back to the idea of Christ, considered by turns in either one of His two natures. Ere she descended from heaven, the natural virtues had prepared the way for her; the supernatural virtues which she brought down with her, accompany her and lend their aid in the comprehension of the doctrines which she teaches. She it is who unveils the meaning of the scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles; she also who, according to Dante's interpretation, is the mystical bride of Solomon.[1] The sacred drama then continues: the procession divides; the damozel remains alone to guard the car successively menanced by the eagle, the fox, and the dragon: she puts to flight the second of these allegorical enemies. She has become a participant in the history of the Church, the guardian of tradition, victorious over error. The young Florentine disappears under a role which can be no other than that of Theology. The reality is transfigured into the symbol.[2]

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[1] Purgatorio, xxx., 25. "In sooth, I'm Beatrice."—*Ibid.*, 39. "Such had this man become in his *new life*, etc." May we not here suspect an intention of connecting the Divine Comedy with the little work wherein the germ of the great poem was first deposited?

Here, undeniably, we find something that no previous poet had ever dreamed of, something that Dante himself had not foreseen in his first transports; this probably is the apparition, the secret of which he kept to himself for several years, until he was ready to unfold it, adorned with every poetical charm, to the amazement of posterity. Viewing the subject from another point, if we consider the place which this singular scene holds in the poem, we find that it occupies very nearly the centre, and there fills a space far greater than that accorded to the most interesting episodes, those for instance of Francesca or of Ugolino, of St. Dominic, St. Francis, or Cacciaguida: this may seem to be a minute observation, but it is one not without value when we are considering a work so learnedly constructed, so strictly proportioned. *There* seems to be the apogee, so to speak, of the chief role. The *blessed damozel* triumphant in Purgatory, divined from afar off, amid the horrors of Hell, is to a certain degree effaced amid the ultimate glories of Paradise. Virgil stands in her stead at the beginning of the journey; and at its close, St. Bernard takes her place. It is in the intermediary halt that she gleams with a lustre unborrowed and unshaded, that she avowedly sits a queen, that she receives the respectful homage of all, and that the most imposing figures of Christianity are gathered together at her feet. The apotheosis of Beatrice then seems to be the primal theme of the Divine Comedy.[1]

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[1] Convito, ii., 15. "Of this one (the divine science) Solomon says: 'There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and young maidens without number: one is my dove, my perfect one.' He calls all the sciences queens and concubines, and young maidens, but this one he calls a dove, because she is without blemish of variance; this one he calls perfect, because she makes that truth to be perfectly seen in which our soul finds rest."

[2] This interpretation is also that of M. Villemain, *Cours de littérature* tableau de la littérature au moyen age, pages 378, 382.

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[1] We think we have already amply shown that in the course of the poem Beatrice continues to sustain her symbolic character: she goes on dogma-

Thus was this magnificent work subjected to the law which weighs upon every human production; it was brought forth in sorrow, to grow up in the sweat of the brow. The first inspiration, undoubtedly, came from love. But, as under the lineaments dear to him the Christian poet recognized the reflection of the creative thought; as for him, far more than for Plato, the Beautiful was the Splendor of the True, so did he blend in one and the same veneration, so was he to blend in a common glorification, Love and Science. Later on when (his lot having cast him into the midst of civil conflicts) he devoted his life to the service of the ideal Good, and beheld that sacred ideal outraged and distorted by the perversity of factions, he set to work to make reparation to it by the power of words, and, in the epos of Love and of Science, he allotted a place to Justice. These three great lights of the moral world, Justice, Science, and Love, illumine the three divisions of the poem; they form, as it were, the triple aureole which Dante purposed placing on the head of his well-beloved. An obscure child of the banks of the Arno, scarcely

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tizing through all the spheres of Paradise; in the very beginning of the Inferno Virgil had addressed to her these significant words: "Thou, by whose aid the human race penetrates beyond sublunary things." She is also called "the praise of God, the light interposed between the intellect and the truth." Are these attributes pertaining to a young woman of twenty six?

known to the denizens of her own city, so soon forgotten in her early grave, he had promised to make her for ever famous. He fulfilled his vow, and, if the epistle written by him on her decease to all the princes of the time failed to reach its address, the Divine Comedy has gone much farther; the name of Beatrice has penetrated to every spot where the soft Italian tongue is not unknown, and it will be repeated in every age still retaining the inheritance of Christian literature. In presence of this miraculous power of genius, which confers at will life and immortality, we are lost in admiration, and we ask ourselves: If Art can thus crown its chosen ones, what will not God do for His elect?

3. We have now to offer some explanations regarding two other personages, who at the beginning of the Inferno intervene in the action of the poem, then vanish to re-appear, but always seem to elude the investigations of commentators. Beatrice charges Virgil to aid Dante, who has gone astray in the forest. She thus speaks. "In Heaven there is a noble lady ... whose compassion softens the rigor of the divine judgments; she addressed herself to Lucia and thus besought her: 'Thy faithful one now stands in need of thee, and unto thee I recommend him.' Lucia, foe of all that is cruel, hastened away, and came unto the place where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel. 'Beatrice,' said she, 'the true praise of God, why succorest thou not him who loved thee so?' ... I, after such words as these were uttered,

came hither downward from my blessed seat, confiding in thy discourse. . . ." And again, Virgil, when encouraging the dismayed poet to cross the threshold of the invisible world, says to him: "Why dost thou delay? Canst thou be wanting in courage and confidence when three blessed women are caring for thee in the court of Heaven?"[1]

Of these blessed women, the third alone is thus far fully known to us: we must try to solve whatever mystery may remain, in regard to the two others. Lucia appears again in the Purgatorio: she takes up the sleeping poet, and bears him in her arms to the entrance of the "dolorous way." He finds her once more, at the end of the journey, in the first circle of the radiant amphitheatre of the Empyrean, seated near St. John the Baptist and St. Anne.[2] He certainly intended to depict in her a living figure, a daughter of men, like to the other blessed ones whose felicity she shares, a saint to whom he doubtless felt grateful for some signal favor conferred. Now, Giacopo di Dante, a decisive authority in any matter of biography, tells us that his illustrious father professed an especial devotion toward St. Lucy, the virgin martyr of Syracuse.[3] Her name is inscribed in the canon of the Mass in the Roman Liturgy, and she has long been in Italy the recipient of wide-spread veneration; churches under her invocation were found in all the large cities; her feast-day was kept, and her name continued popular, until somewhat eclipsed in later times by newer names rendered by recent memories more prominent or more beloved. Repeated miracles attested the efficacy of her prayers: one of the most renowned took place at Verona, in 1308, the era at which many fix the sojourn of the Florentine exile in that city. But his devotion had still other motives in the pious beliefs of, and even in the mistakes made by, his contemporaries. The heroic action of another Christian woman was attributed to St. Lucy; namely, that when closely pressed by the evil desires of a Roman magistrate, she tore out her eyes and sent them in a golden cup to her persecutor: she was usually represented as holding the vessel containing the eyes thus sacrificed. Now, a touching custom led the men of that day, when seeking aid under any especial form of misery, to the altars of such martyrs as had most meritoriously passed through like afflictions. St. Lucy was thus invoked by all suffering from afflictions of the eyes.[1] As a natural consequence, she came to be looked upon as the dispenser of the spiritual enlightenment that dispels doubts in the understanding and darkness in the conscience. The Golden Legend, which dwells with pleasure upon mystical etymologies, does not permit this one to pass unnoticed: *Lucia a luce; Lucia quasi lucis via.*[1] Dante, whose intelligence so ardently aspired to the eternal lights of truth, and whose eye-sight (injured by close application in reading and by the tears shed after the death of his well-beloved) had suffered from a long and dangerous impairment,[2] had two reasons for placing confidence in the intercession of the virgin who illumines. He knelt before her effigies with the theologian of the cloister and the blind man of the wayside. His prayer answered, he hung up his votive offering, not in any obscure chapel, but in the poetical edifice raised by his own genius.

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[1] Inferno, ii., *passim*.

[2] Purgatorio, ix., 17; Paradiso, xxxii., 46.

[3] Giacopo di Dante, MS. Commentary: "Blessed Lucy, toward whom he had a special devotion."

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[1] Cajetan, *Vitæ SS. Siculorum* acta sanctæ Luciæ Syracusanæ martyris. Baillet, *Vie des Saints.*

There now only remains to make known her whom Lucy herself obeys, and to whom alone belongs the initiative of the miraculous pilgrimage. We cannot here join in the general opinion of commentators, who see in her simply the Divine Clemency or Prevenient Grace: an allegory based upon no real personality could scarcely properly be bound together with two actual, historical personages. We even expect to find the unknown re-appearing, as do her two companions during or toward the close of the Paradiso: thus much is required by the symmetrical ordering of the narration. But who is in Heaven the noble lady whom it is not necessary to name, whose intercession softens the decrees of the immutable Judge, whose commands make Lucy and Beatrice rise from their places? Who should it be, if not she who was called *Our Lady* in the ancient tongue of Christian nations? It is indeed she, the Blessed Virgin, whom the poet descries seated as a queen, occupying the first place in that assemblage of the glorified; he beholds the angels showering upon her all the joys of eternity: in her august countenance he contemplates, more glorious than ever, the divine resemblance: to her he addresses the sublime prayer with which his last canto begins. He makes no secret of his devotion toward her whom he invokes morning and evening:

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[1] Jacob. de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, de vita sanctæ Luciæ.

[2] Convito, iii., 9.—The New Life; near the end.

> The name of the fair flower I e'er invoke
> Morning and evening.[1]

He desires this beloved figure to be found at the beginning and at the end of his poem, as it was found on the threshold and at the summit of all religious edifices during the Middle Ages.

We can the better comprehend the poetic part assigned to the Mother of our Lord, when we find her several times alluded to in the Vita Nuova as the object of the pious love of Beatrice, as the model of her virtues and her especial patroness. Mary was for her what Lucy was for Dante.[2] He himself, in a philosophical fragment until now little noticed, would seem to have done away with the last remaining doubts in this regard. He undertakes to explain the annual revolution of the sun; and, in order to give to his hypotheses a more readily comprehended form, he imagines at the poles of the terrestrial globe, two cities, whose inhabitants become spectators of the supposed phenomena. But, instead of indicating these two points by an algebraic sign, as would be done by astronomers at the present day, he gives the name of *Maria* to the city situated at the north pole, beneath the star that never sets, and that of *Lucia* to the city placed at the south pole. Then, by the construction of the disquisition, Mary, in three pages, is mentioned nine times (always the mystic number), while Lucy is named only six times.[1]

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[1] Paradiso, xxiii., 30.

[2] The New Life. Thus, one of the most interesting scenes related in the book takes place in a church where the praises of the Blessed Virgin are being sung. Also, we find the name of Mary profoundly venerated by Beatrice, and the young saint finally placed by the side of her protectress, "in the Heaven of humility."

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[1] Convito, iii., 5. "Then imagining, the better to understand, that in the place of which I spake there is a city, and its name is Maria, . . . let us imagine another city, named Lucia, etc."—Dante has sung the Blessed Virgin in a sonnet, which we cannot refrain from quoting here, as one of the most beautiful tributes proffered by men to the Mother of God (Lyell's Tr., except the first word):

Mother of virtue, light eternal, thou,
 Of whom was born the meek benignant Fruit
 That suffered on the cross a bitter death,
 To save us sinners from the dark abyss:
Thou, queen of heaven, and of this world, supreme,
 Vouchsafe to entreat thy ever-worthy Son
 To bring me to His heavenly kingdom's joys,
 By virtue of His never-failing grace.
Thou knowest my hope was ever placed in thee;
 Thou knowest in thee was ever my delight;

These favorite names thus interwoven in the web of the discourse, as two ciphers in a monogram, plainly enough betray the intention dictating their use in this manner. This is one of those charming puerilities which so greatly please us when we find them in great men; a distraction of the heart amid the labor of thought. It is at the same time an ingenious modesty, which, not venturing to employ together the names of the two clients, makes use, in their stead, of the names of their sainted patronesses. Finally, it is a religious care to place his chaste affection of this nether world under the safeguard, under the responsibility, so to speak, of the two heavenly virgins. We here find amid the very thorns of scholastic erudition, a flower of most delicate sensibility blooming in the light of faith. Here is indeed a revelation of Dante's character, the explanation of the personality of Beatrice, the secret of the poem. For we now understand why, in the second canto of the Inferno, that first conversation is held between Mary and Lucy, in consequence of which the well-beloved Beatrice descends to aid the poet, and on which depends the entire action of the poem, with all its lessons and its beauties.

O goodness infinite, support me now;
Help me, for at the bourn I am arrived
Which I must soon inevitably pass;
O now, chief comforter, forsake me not:
For every fault committed here on earth
My soul deplores, and contrite is my heart.

III.—Dante's First Studies in Philosophy.

HOW HE WAS LED TO THE EXAMINATION OF MORAL AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS.—HIS RESPECT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF ARISTOTLE.—EXTRACTS FROM THE CONVITO ii., 13; iv., 1, 6.[1]—CONJECTURES IN REGARD TO THE PERIOD OF DANTE'S JOURNEY TO PARIS.—RESEARCHES OF M. VICTOR LE CLERC CONCERNING SIGER DE BRABANT.—CONCLUSIONS, IN AID OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE POEM.

I.

"WHEN she was lost to me who was th efirst joy of my soul, I remained pierced with so pungent a grief that no sort of solace seemed to touch my malady. Yet, after the lapse of some time, my reason, which sought to heal the wound, bethought itself (since my own efforts and those of others had not availed to soothe me) of having recourse to the means by which sundry mourners had found consolation. I began to read in that book by Boethius, unknown to many, in which he charmed away the sorrows of his downfall and captivity. Then, having heard that Cicero had written a book on *Friendship*, wherein he related how Lelius was consoled for the death of his friend Scipio, I applied myself to the reading of that book. Although it was at first difficult for me to enter into the thought of these writers, I finally penetrated into its meaning so far as my knowledge of the art of grammar and some degree of intelligence on my part would permit—the said intelligence giving me to see, as in a dream, many truths, as may be observed in the Vita Nuova. Now, as it sometimes happens that a man looking for silver, contrary to his expectation finds gold, which some unknown cause has placed in his way, not perhaps without design on the part of the Divine Will, so, I seeking consolation, found not only a remedy for my tears, but names of authors, terms of science, and titles of books, which led me to think that Philosophy, the sovereign inspirer of such authors, sciences, and books, must be something very great. I imagined her formed as a noble lady, to whom I could not but ascribe a sweet and pitying countenance, so that my ravished senses could scarcely detach themselves from her image. From that moment I began to frequent the places where she showed herself, namely, the schools of religious orders and the assemblies of those who philosophize, so that, at the end of a short space of time, about thirty months, I felt myself so touched by the sweetness of her conversation, that my love for her excluded every other thought. .... For this lady of my mind was the daughter of God, queen of all things, most noble and most beautiful; she was philosophy. ..."

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[1] We regret that we cannot here offer still more ample extracts, and thus make that fine work, the Convito, better known. Bouterweck compares it to the most excellent philosophical treatises of antiquity (*Geschichte der Schœnen Wissenschaften*, vol. I., p. 61). At least we have endeavored to preserve the simple and familiar form of the style.

2. "Love, according to the unanimous opinion of the wise men who have discoursed thereupon, and according to the daily teachings of experience, has, as its essential effect, the power of bringing together, of uniting, the person who loves and the person loved; whence it comes that Pythagoras said: 'In friendship, of more than one, one is made.' And, as two things united together naturally communicate to each other their several qualities, so that one may become entirely like the other, the passions of the person loved may pass into the heart of the person loving . . ., so that this latter cannot help loving the friends and hating the enemies of the former. This is why a Greek proverb says: 'Among friends all things are in common.' Having thus become the friend of the noble lady whom I have mentioned, I began to measure out my aversions and my affections according to her hatred and her love; like her, I began to love the disciples of truth and to hate the followers of error. But everything is in itself deserving of love, and nothing merits hatred except in so far as some evil is mingled with it. It is then reasonable and

just to hate, not things, but the evil which is in them, and to try to free them from such evil. Now, if anyone in the world exercises this wonderful art of freeing things from the evil that renders them hateful, it is, above all, my most excellent lady, since in her are to be found, as in their source, all reason and all justice. Desirous then of imitating her in her works as well as in her sentiments, I decried, I anathematized to the extent of my power, public errors; not in order to dishonor those who professed them, but in the hope of making them detest, and consequently of making them banish from their minds, the defects rendering them obnoxious to me. Among such errors, I more especially pursued one, dangerous and fatal, not only to its sectaries, but also to its adversaries. This was the error relating to the nature of nobility. It had become so firmly rooted by custom and by lack of reflection that the general opinion regarding nobility remained almost entirely perverted. From that perverted opinion false judgments arose, and from the said false judgments issued unjust respect and unjust disdain; so that the good were held in contempt and the wicked in honor, whence resulted the worst confusion in the world, as may readily be imagined. Meantime it happened that the sweet countenance of my noble lady became somewhat obscured to me, and did not allow me to read clearly in her eyes that which I sought to know, namely, whether God had created, by a formal act of will, the first matter of the elements. In consequence of this, I for some time suspended my assiduities in her service, and, in the absence of her accustomed favors, I occupied my leisure in meditating on the general error which I had come to perceive . . . The lady alluded to is the same one mentioned in the previous chapter, to wit, Philosophy, that potent light, under favor of whose rays the germ of nobility deposited in the heart of man develops, blossoms, and fructifies.

3. "Authority is a character which inspires faith and commands obedience. Now, that Aristotle is supremely worthy of obedience and of credence, may be demonstrated as follows. Workmen and artisans in various occupations which all concur in the intent of some principal art, ought to obey and believe in him who exercises that art, in him who alone knows the end common to all their labors. Thus to the knight ought to be subservient those whose callings are intended for the service of knighthood, those who forge swords and bucklers, and the makers of saddles and bridles. And, as all the works of man suppose a last end, to attain which is the destiny of human nature, the master whose business it was to lay down and to make us acquainted with that end, may, with good reason, claim to be believed in and obeyed.

"That master is Aristotle. . . . To understand how Aristotle really came to know in what way to lead human reason to the discovery of the last end of man, we must not forget that from the oldest times the researches of the wisest men were directed to this aim.

But, as men are many, and the appetites from which none are exempt vary with every individual, it was difficult to determine the point where all the appetites pertaining to humanity could find legitimate satisfaction. There were, in days long gone by, ancient philosophers, the first of whom was Zeno, [1] who thought that the end of human life was to be found in rigid uprightness, which consisted in following strictly and without any external considerations the way of truth and justice, in giving utterance to no pain and to no pleasure, in rendering oneself impassible. And they defined uprightness, thus conceived, 'that which, in the sight of reason, is evidently praiseworthy in itself, without any consideration of interest or of profit.' Those belonging to this school were called Stoics, and of their number was the glorious Cato, whom I scarcely dare to name. There were others who saw and believed differently, of whom the first was a philosopher named Epicurus. This latter considered that each animal, from the instant of his birth, when it is still under the immediate impulsion of nature, shuns pain and seeks pleasure. He concludes from this that the last end to which we tend is enjoyment, that is, pleasure without any mixture of pain. And, admitting no intermediate condition between pain and pleasure, he defines enjoyment, the absence of pain. His reasoning is reported by Cicero in the first book *de Finibus bonorum*. Among the disciples of

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[1] Dante seems to have confounded Zeno of Citium with Zeno of Elæa.

Epicurus, called after him Epicureans, we must count Torquatus, a noble Roman, descended from the celebrated Torquatus, judge of his own son. There were finally others, who had for their head Socrates, and then Plato, his successor; and these, being endowed with more penetration, discovered that in all our actions, we may err, and in fact that we do commonly err, either by exaggeration or by insufficiency. Consequently, they decided that the exercise of human activity, in a mean freely chosen between excess and deficiency, between the too much and the too little, is precisely the supreme end in question; they defined the *Sovereign Good*, 'activity within the limits of virtue.' These were called Academicians: Plato, and Speusippus his nephew, bore this title, borrowed from the place where Plato pursued his meditations. Socrates did not leave them his name, because he had laid down no body of doctrines. But Aristotle, the Stagyrite, whom nature had endowed with a genius almost divine, and Xenocrates of Chalcedon, who shared in his labors, having recognized the true end of man very much according to the views held by Socrates and the Academy, gave to ethics a more regular form, and reduced it to its most perfect expression[1] . . . And because Aristotle argued while he walked up and down, he and his companions were called Peripatetics. As Aristotle gave the final touch to ethics, the name of Academician fell out of use, and that of Peripatetic designated the entire school which at the present time holds the intellectual government of the world; so that the opinions maintained by it may, in a certain sense, be called Catholic. Hence we may see that Aristotle was the man who directed the eyes and the steps of the human race toward the end to which it ought to tend; and this is the proposition we wished to demonstrate."

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[1] This singular estimate which represents Aristotle as the continuer of Plato, justifies the views set forth in Chap. II., Part III. It is by no means irreconcilable with the letter written by Marsilius Ficinus, referred to in that connection, and from which we cannot deny ourselves the

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pleasure of quoting a few lines: "Dante Alighieri, celestial, as to country; a Florentine, by his place of residence; by race, angelic; and by profession, a poet-philosopher; although he did not converse with that revered father of philosophers and interpreter of the truth, in the Greek tongue, he nevertheless spoke in the spirit of Plato and in the same manner, adorning his book with many Platonic sentences. And by such great adornments he conferred so great honor upon the city of Florence, that one might as truly say, the Florence of Dante, as, Dante of Florence. We find three realms described in our most correct leader, Plato; one of the beatified, one of the wretched, and one of wanderers. He calls those beatified, who are in the city of life, restored, reëstablished; wretched, they who are forever shut out of that city; and pilgrims or wanderers, they who are outside of that city but not condemned to eternal exile. In this third order, he places all the living, and such among the dead as are destined to temporal purgation. This Platonic order was first followed by Virgil; the same was, later on, followed by Dante, who drank with the cup of Virgil at the springs of Plato."—See Appendix, No. 3.

II.

The passages just quoted make clear to us the first steps of Dante in the philosophical studies into which he was to penetrate so deeply. We here see his earliest teachers, Cicero and Bœthius; the monastic schools, that is, the schools in the monasteries of Santa Croce and of San Marco, of the Franciscans and the Dominicans, whose beneficent rivalry revived instruction throughout Christendom; and finally, the "assemblies of those who philosophize," in which I think I recognize those solemn disputations so passionately loved by the Middle Ages. I find these at an early day at Florence, when, in 1063, the people, under the guidance of the monks of Vallombrosa, rose against the bishop and the Nicolaïtes;[1] when in 1115, the Epicureans, as Villani relates, became numerous enough to constitute a formidable faction. It was the controversies in matters of religion that had completed, if I may be allowed thus to express myself, the political education of the Italian cities which dictated conditions to emperors, and whose *podestàs* set their plebeian signatures to the treaty of Constance.

It seems that these lights sufficed to satisfy the curiosity of Dante, and that he did not leave Florence during the thirty months following the death of Beatrice,[1] that is, not until the end of the year 1294. Starting from this date, we lose track of him, and do not recover it until 1299, when, on the eighth of May, we find him charged with the conduct of a negotiation between the commune of Florence and that of San-Geminiano.[2] About the same time we find his name inscribed in the books of the corps of physicians and apothecaries, one of the six arts called to the election of the six priors of the city.[3] In this space of five years must be placed his marriage, sundry of the embassies ascribed to him by Filelfo, the studies that Boccaccio and Benvenuto da Imola represent him as pursuing at the universities of Bologna and Padua: to these must perhaps be added his journey to Paris. This latter question still stands in need of elucidation. It is certainly not uninteresting to know what sights were offered to the poet's view when he visited the great schools of France.

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[1] Voigt, Life of Gregory VII.

Witnesses worthy of credence put off this journey to the period of Dante's exile. Here are the words of Boccaccio:[4] "When he beheld every way closed against hope of return, he abandoned, not only Tuscany, but Italy; crossing the Alps, he went, as best he might, to Paris. There he gave himself up to the study of theology and philosophy. He often entered the schools and maintained propositions in all the sciences against those who wished to argue with him. . . . One day when he was maintaining a thesis *de quolibet* in a school of theology, several learned men proposed to him fourteen questions on different subjects, with the arguments for and against: he, without taking any time to reflect, repeated them in the same order in which they had been laid down: then, keeping on in the same sequence, he resolved them skilfully, and replied to the arguments on the opposite side; the which was regarded by all present as almost a miracle." Benvenuto da Imola and Villani indicate the same period,[1] but without entering into the above details, which show memories carefully preserved. But the reminiscences of Boccaccio are not always without flaw. Born in 1313, he was the recipient of a tradition already somewhat antiquated, and fables find their way into his narrative: the birth and the death of the poet are therein encompassed by apparitions and dreams. We see the beginning of that circlet of popular legends so often woven for the crowning of great names.

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[1] (The "thirty months" mentioned are, according to some of the later commentators, to be reckoned from the date of the first acquaintance with philosophy, and not from the date of Beatrice's death).—*Tr.*

[2] Pelli, *Memorie*, p. 94.

[3] Idem, *ibid.*, p. 90. The register has inscribed on it these words: "Dante d'Aldighiero degli Aldighieri, poeta florentino."

[4] Boccaccio, Life of Dante.—Cf. *Genealog. deorum*, xiv., 2.

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[1] Benvenuto, *apud* Muratori, *Antiquit. Ital.*, i., 1036.—Villani, *apud* Muratori, *Scriptores*, xiii., 508.

I find a first motive for doubt in the contrary assertion of John of Serravalle, bishop of Fermo, one of the first commentators of the fifteenth century, which assertion takes Dante in his earlier years to Padua, Bologna, Oxford, and Paris.[1] "He was a bachelor in the University of Paris, where he read in public the Book of Sentences, to fulfil the conditions of mastership: according to custom, he replied to all the doctors, and went through all the acts required to obtain a doctorate in theology. Nothing remained undone except the act of installation (*inceptio seu conventus*). But he lacked the requisite funds, and hence he returned to Florence (without the doctorate, but) an adept in the arts, and a perfect theologian. He was of a noble family, skilful in affairs; he was made a prior of the Florentine people, so that he became absorbed in the functions of public office, forgot the School, and never went back to Paris." This text is easily reconcilable with the testimony of Filelfo, who, writing at Florence where he had access to documents lost to us, relates that Dante visited Paris in the capacity of ambassador from the Florentines, consequently, previous to his banishment, and that he pleased the king by the agreeability of his conversation.[1] This is sufficient, not indeed to refute Boccaccio, but to present another view of the facts, and at least to prove the uncertainty of the tradition relating to this matter. One point remains undeniable, and that is, the fact of the journey to France, for which I can again appeal to the authority of the commentary by Giacopo di Dante. When explaining the lines in the ninth canto of the Inferno relating to the famous tombs at Arles, he states that his father had seen them.[2] But the *time when* is not specified, and hence there is a free field for arguments of another kind.

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[1] Apud Tiraboschi, from the year 1300 to 1400, lib. iii., c. ii.: "Diu studuit tam in Oxoniis in regno Angliæ, quam Parisiis in regno Franciæ; et fuit Bachalarius in universitate Parisiensi, in qua legit sententias pro forma magisterii, legit Biblia, respondit omnibus doctoribus, ut moris est, et fecit omnes actus qui fieri debent ad doctorandum in sacra theologia," etc.

If we consider the implacable resentment against France professed by Dante from the day of his exile, a resentment which appears throughout the poem whenever occasion offers, we can scarcely believe that he would at that very time have visited a people so detested by him, that he could have desired to behold the capital of the Capetian princes who had become the persecutors of himself and the oppressors of his country. How could that close observer, whom nothing escaped, have frequented the University of Paris in 1308, without finding it filled with the renown of Duns Scotus, who died that same year, and who is not once mentioned either in the Divine Comedy or in the Convito? I can find in these works no trace of the philosophical revolt, the noisy protest of the Franciscan school against the triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Preaching Friars. On the contrary, in the tenth canto of the Paradiso, we see St. Thomas in possession of an uncontested empire: he is among the saints what Aristotle is among the philosophers, the *Master of those who know*. It is he who sets the ranks in order, who resolves difficult questions. We recognize the sovereign authority which the writings of the Angelic Doctor kept in the school until the close of the thirteenth century. As an instance, we need only adduce Godfrey des Fontaines, who, in 1289, examined if one could censure the opinions of St. Thomas without committing mortal sin.[1] Among the contemporaries of St. Thomas, I find named only St. Bonaventura, as approaching but not equalling him. Among those who succeeded him, the poet names but one: "That is the eternal light of Siger, who, reading lectures in the Street of Straw, did syllogize invidious verities."[2] Such precise particulars, so lively an admiration for a man whose renown was soon dimmed in France and never passed beyond the Alps, to my mind undoubtedly point out the doctor at whose feet Dante himself had sat. And as he meets in heaven only persons dead before the year 1300, the date assigned by him to his vision, we are permitted to conclude that the poet visited Paris in the interval between 1294 and 1299. We may thus explain the period of disorder in his father's life which Giacopo di Dante places before his thirty-fifth year, that is, before the year 1300.[1] During that stormy season of life, at so great a distance from Florence and from the memorials of Beatrice, I can understand the errors of the poet thus borne along amid the noisy crowd frequenting the schools of Paris. *Raro sanctificantur qui multum peregrinantur*—Rarely are they sanctified who travel much.

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[1] Pelli, *Memorie*, 93.

[2] Inferno, ix., 38.

> "Even as at Arles...
> The sepulchres make all the place uneven.

"The author in this part speaks of having seen many tombs of the dead. He introduces a similitude, that, as in a city named Arles, etc. . . ." Manuscript Commentary by Giacopo di Dante, Royal Library, No. 7765.

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[1] Quétif and Echard, *Scriptores ordinis prædicatorum*, vol. i.

[2] Paradiso, x. 46.

Sigieri ought regularly to be rendered in French by *Siger* as *Ruggieri* by *Roger*.

III.

We must now seek to convey some idea of the instruction which left such enduring memories in Dante's mind. And here come in the admirable researches of M. Victor Le Clerc in regard to Siger of Brabant. While awaiting their publication, accompanied by their full proofs, in the one and twentieth volume of the Literary History of France, M. Le Clerc has had the kindness to send me the notes I am about to quote. May I here be permitted to thank him for allowing me to use them in my work which he has thus enriched, to thank him also in behalf of the poet's friends, who will henceforth be spared many doubts and misconceptions touching this matter.

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[1] See the notes to the following section.

We find in the anonymous treatise *de Recuperatione terræ sanctæ* (Ap. Bongars, t. ii., p. 316–361), written about the year 1306, the eulogium of an excellent doctor in philosophy, Siger de Brabant (*præcellentissimus doctor philosophiæ magister Sigerius de Brabantia*), whom the author had listened to in his youth. In another place, in a plan for study drawn up for the use of the young people whom he wishes to call to the conquest of the Holy Land, he recommends the *Quæstiones naturales* extracted from the writings of Brother Thomas, of Siger, and of some other doctors.[1] Again, and previous to the year 1300, we find a legacy of sundry parts of the works of St. Thomas bequeathed to poor masters in theology of the house of Sorbonne, by Siger, then dean of the collegiate church of Courtray.[2] Finally, the historians of the order of St. Dominic are acquainted with a Siger of Brabant, called up (in 1278) for the offence of heresy before the tribunal of the Dominican, Simon du Val, and acquitted.[1] The name Brabant then covered much more territory than it covers at the present time: Courtray might have been included in it without any considerable lack of geographical exactitude, a quality, be it said, somewhat rare among the writers of that time. We may here recognize the Siger of the Paradiso, the same person called by sundry commentators, Siger of Brabant (Brabante and sometimes Bramante', who appears in company with St. Thomas Aquinas, and thus, so to speak, under the responsibility of that glorious champion of orthodoxy, and who indeed requires such patronage to cover the suspicions aroused by the boldness of his public teaching: "Reading in the Street of Straw."

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[1] Item expediret quod quæstiones naturales haberent extractas de scriptis tam fratris Thomæ quam Segeri et aliorum doctorum.—Bongars, t. II., p. 337.

[2] Quétif and Echard, *Scriptores ordinis prædic.*, vol. i., p. 295.

But to unearth the biography of Siger was not enough; M. Le Clerc was also to discover his works. Among the manuscripts of the old Sorbonne foundation, sundry fragments have been preserved of the *Quæstiones naturales*, and of several treatises on dialectics, bearing the name of Siger, the whole crowned by a book in which clearly appears the character of the mind so rashly judged by his contemporaries. The book bears the name of *Im-*

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[1] Quétif and Echard, vol. i., p. 395. The *Ottimo commento* thus speaks: "This is master Sigier, who *composed* and *read* Logic in Paris, and held the chair many years in the Street of Straw, which is a place in Paris where Logic is read....and he says that he read invidious verities because he read the *elenchuses*." We are then concerned with a doctor who *read* and who *composed*, one by turns a professor and an author.

possibilia, and opens with these words: "The doctors of the School of Paris being assembled together, a dialectician proposed to prove, and to defend before them, several impossible theses, of which the first was this: *That God does not exist.*"[1] Then follow other propositions not less scandalous, supported by appropriate arguments. Here we see the characteristics of the indefatigable logician; enamored of controversy, and defying the School to the combat of syllogisms, *sillogizzo.*

After the writings of Siger, nothing remained to be discovered except his legend; M. le Clerc found this in sundry manuscript commentaries on the Divine Comedy. The first one contains the following narrative. "The poet says that St. Thomas pointed out to him also the soul of Siger of Brabant, who was a man excelling in all sorts of sciences; he was an infidel, and a doctor at Paris. Now this adventure happened to him; one of his pupils who had died appeared to him one night in a vision, and showed him how he was suffering great torments. Among other pangs, he made Siger hold out his hand, and he then let fall into it a drop of his sweat; that drop made him experience so sharp a pain that he awoke; in consequence of this, Siger abandoned study, had himself baptized, became the saintly friend of God, and thenceforth strove to lead the opinions of philosophers back to the holy Catholic faith." Another commentary adds that the disciple appeared all covered over with sophisms. The Latin glosses say *co-opertus sophismatibus*, or *cum cappa plena cedulis.* Some texts give only the first words of the narrative, and suddenly break off as if the occurrence was one well known to their readers. We in fact find the same tale before the time of Siger, in the authors quoted by Duboulay (*Hist. de l'Univ. de Paris, année* 1172); in Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum historiale*, lib. xxv., c. 89). It has passed into the Golden Legend as having taken place on All Souls' Day. The confusion is explained by the suspicion surrounding the doctrine of Siger, which had led to his appearance before the tribunal of the inquisitor. These are again the ill-received truths of which the poet speaks: "*Invidiosi veri.*"

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[1] Convocatis sapientibus studii Parisiensis, proposuit sophista quidam impossibilia multa probare et defendere. Quorum primum fuit, Deum non esse.

IV.

These biographical studies lead to important conclusions. When Dante was about to begin his immortal work, he had already passed through the course of instruction given at the Paris University (in the laborious fashion of the students of the thirteenth century, seated on straw, at the feet of the masters), and hence through the dialectic schools and the noisy disputes of the *rue du Fouarre.* Thence he carried over into his poetry all the modes of contemporary learning, and consequently the method of allegorical interpretation, applied not only to the Sacred Scriptures, but to the texts of Virgil or Ovid. Moreover, he was full of the teaching of St. Thomas, which he had found in all the glory of a new reign. How could his great soul, captivated and deeply impressed by these doctrines, not have felt the need of inculcating them by casting them in a form of his own invention, and thus handing them over to the men of his day that they might be preserved to future ages? Hence we are entitled to seek in the Divine Comedy all that the poet could have put into it,—philosophy as its foundation, allegory as its form, and labor in its every part. At the same time, we may once more have learned the lesson, opposed to the prejudices of many, that science never kills inspiration, and that discipline does not stifle genius.

(Father Bowden, in his translation of Dr. Hettinger's commentary on the Divine Comedy, says that Siger was "Sigebert, a monk of the Abbey of Gemblours. His chief work, the *Chronica*, is intended to justify from history, the Ghibelline claims." Whether this person is, or is not, the same as that unearthed by M. le Clerc, the present writer cannot say.—*Tr.*)

DOCUMENTS

In Elucidation of the History of Philosophy in the Thirteenth Century.

I. Bull of Innocent IV. for the Revival of Philosophical Studies.[1]

INNOCENT, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to all the prelates of the kingdoms of France, England, Scotland, Wales, Spain, and Hungary, health and apostolic benediction.

A deplorable rumor is current, and passing from mouth to mouth has come to afflict our ears. It is said that the greater number of aspirants to the priesthood, abandoning, nay, disdaining philosophical studies, and consequently the lectures on theology, frequent only schools where the civil law is explained. It is added, and this it is that more especially calls down the rigors of divine justice, that in many countries the bishops reserve the prebends, ecclesiastical honors and dignities, for those who fill chairs of jurisprudence or who can lay claim to the title of advocate; whereas these qualities, if not covered by others, ought rather to be regarded as motives for exclusion. The nurslings of philosophy, so tenderly gathered to her bosom, so assiduously nourished with her doctrines, so well fashioned by her care to the duties of life, languish in a misery which allows to them neither their daily bread nor the covering of their nakedness, and this obliges them to shun the eyes of men and seek darkness, like birds of night. And meanwhile, our men of the Church (become men of the Law), mounted on fine steeds, clad in purple, covered with precious stones, with gold, and with silk, their raiment reflecting the rays of the scandalized sun, parade everywhere the spectacle of their pride, exhibiting in their persons, not the vicars of Christ, but the heirs of Lucifer, and thus provoking the anger of the people, not only against themselves, but also against the sacred authority of which they are the unworthy representatives ... Sara is then a slave, and Agar has become mistress.[1]

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[1] Duboulay, *Histoire de l'Université de Paris*, year 1254.

We have desired to find a remedy for this uncustomary disorder. We have wished to lead minds back to the teachings of theology, the science of salvation; or at least to philosophical studies, which do not indeed yield the sweet emotions of piety, but in which are to be found the first glimmerings of eternal truth, whereby also the soul is freed from the wretched preoccupations of cupidity, root of all evils and like unto the worship of idols. Wherefore, we decide by these presents that henceforth no professor of jurisprudence, no lawyer, whatever may be the rank or the renown enjoyed by him in the faculty of the law, can lay claim to prebends, to ecclesiastical honors and dignities, nor even to inferior benefices, if he has not given the requisite proofs of capacity in the faculty of arts, and if he is not recommended by the innocence of his life and the purity of his morals . . . In case that any prelates through blameworthy presumption, should allow themselves in any way to contravene this salutary order, by the fact itself, and with full right, they shall be deprived for that time of the power of conferring the vacant benefice; a repetition of the offence may be punished with the spiritual divorce, which we shall pronounce against the prevaricator by depriving him of his prelature.

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[1] This eloquent invective calls to mind, and perhaps excuses, the severe words of Dante in regard to the abuses and scandals of his day.

Given at Rome, in the year of the Incarnation 1254.

II. General Classification of Human Knowledge.–St. Bonaventura, "de Reductione artium ad Theologiam."[1]

"Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."

Thus speaks the Apostle, St. James; and these words, which point out the source of all intellectual illumination, enable us to foresee that the light emanating from so fruitful a source must be multiple. For, admitting that every illumination is accomplished in us in the same manner, that is, by the internal perception of the true, we nevertheless can distinguish an exterior light which illumines the mechanical arts; an inferior light which is reflected in the knowledge acquired by the senses; an interior light, that of philosophic thought; and a superior light, that of Grace and of the Holy Scriptures. The first enables us to grasp artificial forms; the second, to apprehend the natural forms of matter; the third reveals to us intelligible truths; the fourth, the truths pertaining to salvation.

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[1] The fragment we are about to give is also found in the *Précis d'histoire de la Philosophie*, issued by the Directors of Juilly. But the limits of their work necessitated numerous omissions, and we have endeavored to furnish a more complete translation. The encyclopedic efforts of St.

1. The light of the mechanic arts illumines the artificial operations by which we, in some sort, go out from ourselves to satisfy the exigencies of the body; and as these are servile labors, derogatory, foreign to the speculative functions of thought, the light proper to them may be called exterior. It is divided into seven rays, which correspond to the seven arts recognized by Hugh of St. Victor, namely: weaving, working in wood, stone, and metals, agriculture, hunting, navigation, *theatrics*, and medicine. The correctness of this classification may be demonstrated

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Bonaventura, preceded by those of Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, and imitated by Vincent of Beauvais, Brunetto, etc., attest the breadth of those minds so greatly calumniated: they anticipated Bacon of Verulam by more than three centuries.

as follows: All the mechanical arts have for purpose either the solace of our ills, which may be procured by excluding sadness or want; or the multiplication of our *goods*, that is, of all that can serve or please us, according to these lines from Horace:

> Aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetæ . . .
> Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci . . .

The solace and the pleasing of the mind form the object of *theatrics;* it may be defined, "the art of play." It comprises all exercises capable of furnishing recreation: singing, instrumental music, dramatic fictions, and gesticulation. The *goods* which serve to satisfy the material wants of men exact different kinds of labor, according as the requirement is to cover, to feed them, or to complete these two good things by accessory means. If our object be to cover or to shelter ourselves, we may use pliable and light materials. and the management of such pertains to Weaving; or again we may require durable and solid materials, and this will be the art of those who work in metal, in stone, or in wood. If we seek to procure food, there are also two ways of providing it: nourishment may be obtained either from vegetables or from animals: the first belong to the domain of Agriculture, the second pertain to the Chase. Moreover, it may be said that Agriculture is mainly restricted to the production of alimentary substances, and that the functions of the Chase extend to every sort of preparation which these substances may undergo, not excepting the care of the oven, the kitchen, and the cellar. Here one of the parts of the art gives its name to the other portions, in virtue of its pre-eminence over all, and its relations with each one. And finally, if we turn our attention to the accessory means that are required to ensure and to prolong the well-being thus brought about, we may see that it is needful sometimes to supply a deficiency of resources, and sometimes to turn aside the danger of hindrances. The first of these functions is that of Navigation, under which we may include the divers species of Commerce, all destined to furnish food and clothing. The other pertains to Medicine, whether it have for its special end the preparation and administering of electuaries, balsams, and potions, or devote itself to the treatment of wounds, taking the name of Surgery. We have then reason to conclude that the classification of the seven arts is legitimate.

2. The light of the senses permits us to apprehend the natural forms of matter; we call it inferior, because the knowledge acquired through the senses comes from below, and is obtained only under favor of corporeal light. Now, it is susceptible of five different modifications, corresponding to the division of the five senses; the five senses in turn form a complete system; this may be proved by the following argument, borrowed from St. Augustine. The elemental light which enables us to distinguish visible things may remain in all the purity of its essence, and

then it is the principle of sight; when it unites with the air, it becomes the principle of hearing; laden with vapors, it is the cause of smell; impregnated with moisture, taste results; it enters into combination with the element of earth, and thence proceeds touch. For the sensitive spirit is also of a luminous nature; it dwells in the nerves, of which the texture is transparent; it is thickened in the organs of the senses, where by degrees it loses its native limpidity. As then simple bodies are five in number, that is to say, the four elements, and the fifth essence, man has been provided with the five senses which are related to them, that it may be possible for him to perceive all the forms of bodies. In fact, there can be no perception unless there be a correlation, a concurrence between the organ and the object, to call forth the sensation proper to them.[1] Other proofs exist whence we may also conclude that the five senses constitute a complete system; but those that we have just adduced unite in their favor the authority of St. Augustine and the suffrage of reason; they exhibit the whole perfection of human sensibility, by showing the exact correspondence of the divers conditions on which it depends, namely: the organ, the object, and the medium by which these are placed in communication.

3. The light of philosophic thought leads us to the discovery of

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[1] These ideas, beneath their antique form, offer singular analogies with sundry bold guesses of modern science.

intelligible truths; it is called interior, because it is devoted to the search for hidden things, and, moreover, results from the general principles and primary notions which nature has placed within the human mind. This light is distributed between the three divisions of philosophy, which are: rational philosophy, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy. The correctness of this tri-partition may be demonstrated in several ways. Firstly, truth may be considered either in discourse, in things, or in morals. Now, the kind of study called by us *rational*, seeks to maintain truth in discourse; that called *natural*, endeavors to lay hold on the truth in things; *moral* philosophy, or *ethics*, applies itself to the task of making truth reign in behavior. Secondly, as the Divinity may be successively contemplated as the efficient, the formal, and the exemplar cause, that is, as the principle of being, the reason of the mode of being, the type and rule of action: so, to the interior illumination of thought, are revealed the origins of all existences, and this is the object of Physics; the economy of the human mind, and this is the object of Logic; the conduct of life, and this is the object of Ethics. Finally, the light of philosophy enlightens the understanding in its three functions: in so much as it governs the will, and this is the philosophy of duty; in so much as it directs its own self and takes note of that which is without, and this is the philosophy of nature; in so much as it makes words serve its purposes, and then it may be called the philosophy of language: so that man possesses truth under the triple form of practical application, formulated science, and transmissible instruction. The services of words may be employed in three ways: in making known conceptions, in determining convictions, and in arousing passions; consequently, the philosophy of language is divided into three parts: grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the first of these proposes to express, the second to prove, and the third to move. The first considers reason as the apprehensive faculty; the second, as the judicial power; the third, as the motive force; for the three arts relating to the use of words are necessarily related to these three offices of reason, which apprehends through the intermediation of correct speech, which judges by the help of exact speech, and which thrills under the charm of ornate speech. If the understanding turns to the things of the outer world, it is always that it may explain them by reducing them to the formal reasons which make them what they are.[1] Now the formal reasons of things may be considered either in matter, when we call them *seminal;* or in the abstract ideas of the human mind, when we call them *intelligible* or in the Divine Wisdom, when we call them *ideal.* This is why the philosophy of nature is divided into three branches: Physics, properly so called, Mathematics, and Metaphysics. Physics examines into the generation and corruption of beings, according to the natural forces and seminal reasons existing in them. Mathematics considers forms which are capable of being abstracted; it combines them among themselves according to intelligible reasons. Metaphysics, embracing all things, reduces them (following the order of ideal reasons) to the one principle from which they have proceeded, namely, God, who is Cause, End, and universal Type. It matters little that these ideal reasons have been a subject of controversy among metaphysicians. Finally, the government of the will may be restricted within the conditions of the life of the individual, it may be developed within the circle of the family, or extended over the entire multitude of a people to be ruled. Consequently, moral philosophy may be subdivided into three parts: Monastics, Economics, and Politics. The names of these divisions suffice to indicate the three distinct domains that form their several appanages.

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[1] Translate *formal reasons* by *essential laws*, *seminal* by *physical*, *chemical*, and *physiological*, and we find the same abstract ideas under a different terminology.

4. The light of the Holy Scriptures initiates us into the truths pertaining to salvation: if we call that light *superior*, it is because it lifts us to the knowledge of things beyond our natural reach; and also because it descends from the Father of lights by the way of immediate inspiration, and not by the way of reflection. But, even if the light of the Scriptures be *one* from the literal point of view, it is nevertheless *triple* from the mystical and spir-

itual point of view. For, all the sacred books contain, in addition to the literal sense represented by the words, a threefold spiritual sense revealed under the letter, to wit:—the allegorical sense, wherein we discover what we must believe, whether of the Divinity or of the Humanity; the moral sense, whereby we learn in what manner we must live; and the anagogical sense, whereby we recognize the laws according to which man may unite himself to God. Thus, all the teaching of the sacred writers relates to these three points: the Eternal Generation and the Incarnation of the Word, the rules by which to govern life, and the union of the soul with God. The first point has to do with faith; the second, with virtue; and the third with beatitude, which is the end of both the others. The first is the subject of study for doctors; the second, for preachers; and the third, for contemplatives. The teaching of St. Augustine turns upon the first, that of St. Gregory upon the second, and that of St. Dionysius upon the last. St. Anselm followed St. Augustine; St. Bernard was the disciple of St. Gregory; Richard of St. Victor preferred St. Dionysius: for Anselm gave himself to discussion, Bernard to preaching, and Richard to contemplation. Hugh of St. Victor embraced all three of these teachings at the same time, and thus became the pupil of all the three masters.

From the foregoing we may conclude that the light which we have regarded as coming from on high by four ways, may be considered under a new aspect, as forming six different irradiations. We may, in fact, distinguish between the light of the Holy Scriptures, that of the knowledge acquired by means of the senses, and that of the mechanic arts; the light of rational philosophy, that of natural philosophy, and that of moral philosophy. Thus, in this life, there are six appearances of the intellectual light, and these are as so many days having their evenings, since every science of this nether region will have an end; and to them succeeds the seventh day, the day of rest that will have no end, that is to say, the illumination of the soul in the glory of heaven. Thus, the six transitory illuminations may be compared to the six days of creation; so that the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures corresponds to the first creation, which was that of physical light; and so on for the others, in the order that has been indicated. And, as the five successive creations were related to the first, so is all knowledge co-ordinated to that of Holy Writ, is there summed up and perfected, and thus advances to its end in the eternal illumination. Hence, all human sciences ought to converge toward the science contained in the Scriptures, especially when the latter is interpreted in its highest sense; for it is by this means that our lights will return to God, from whom they descended to us. Then the circle now begun will be closed, the sacred number will be filled up, and the divinely instituted order will be realized by the completion of its harmonious proportions.

III. God.

Existence and Attributes of God.—Unity of Essence, Trinity of Persons.—St. Bonaventura, "Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum," c. v. and vii.

God manifests Himself in three ways: outside of us, by the marks which His creative action has left in the world; within us, by His image, which is reflected in the depths of human nature; above us, by the light with which He illumines the superior region of the soul. Those who contemplate Him in the first of these manifestations, stop in the vestibule of the tabernacle; those who rise to the second have entered into the sanctuary; and those who reach the third have penetrated into the Holy of Holies, where rests the ark of the covenant, shadowed by the wings of two cherubim. And the two cherubim in turn figure the two points of view whence the invisible mysteries of the Divinity may be contemplated, namely, the unity of essence and the plurality of persons: the first susceptible of being concluded from the very idea of Being; and the last, from the very idea of Good.[1]

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[1] This is the way in which the holy doctor, in chapters II. and IV. of the same treatise, sums up the principal traits by which God makes Himself known, whether in nature or in humanity: "Material things, considered in general, are subject to three conditions, weight, number, and measure:

And first, in considering the unity of essence, we must take note that the idea of Being bears with it the incontestable certitude of its own reality. For Being excludes the presence of *not-being*, as nothingness implies the absolute lack of existence. And as nothingness in no sense partakes of existence nor of its conditions, so Being cannot have anything in common with not-being, either actually or potentially, either in the order of objective truths or in the arbitrary order of our judgments: it is impossible to suppose that Being is not. Now nothingness, which implies the negation of existence, can only be conceived by means of existence; and this latter, on the contrary, cannot be conceived otherwise than by means of itself. In fact, everything is conceived, either as not being, or as being possible or actual. If then not-being can only be conceived through Being, and Being

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they exhibit themselves under the threefold aspect of mode, kind, and order. In them, finally, we discover substance, force, and action, whence we may ascend as by trustworthy footprints to creative Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. . . .

"Enter into your own interior, and see how your soul cannot refrain from loving itself with extreme ardor. And yet it would not love itself if it did not know itself; it could not know itself if it had no memory of itself; for the intellect grasps only ideas represented by the memory. . . . There are then in your soul three powers wherein you may behold reflected as in a mirror, the image of the Divinity."

in potentiality only through Being in act, Being in act is the first idea which enters the mind. But the object of this first idea is not particular Being, which is limited in its development, and which in this respect remains in a state of potentiality; neither is it abstract general Being, which has no veritable reality: it must then be the Divine Being. Here we may pause to wonder at the blindness of the intellect, which fails to perceive the Absolute Being, even when it knows Him before all other things, and without Him could have known none of them: like to the eye, which, agreeably taken by the shades of colors, seems not to see the light by which it has been enabled to discern them. . . .

If, then, Absolute Being can be perceived only by means of itself, it does not emanate from any other. It is the first of all. If it excludes nothingness, touching upon it in no point, it has neither beginning nor end; it is eternal. If it includes within itself no other element than Being, it is without composition, that is to say, entirely simple. It has not the character of inert power, because inert power in a certain manner partakes of nothingness: it is then always in action. It admits of no defect, and consequently supposes supreme perfection. And as it contains no principle of divisibility, we can say that it is absolutely one. Thus, the Absolute Being is at once the first of all, eternal, entirely simple, always in action, supremely perfect, and of indivisible unity. And these divers attributes are so certain that we cannot even suppose privation of them, and, moreover, each one of them is necessarily bound to those which precede and those which follow; so that the intelligence, when contemplating them, feels as though environed by light from heaven. But now comes that which is to complete its amazement and fairly ravish it. This is, that the Absolute Being appears to it as also the last of all, as supremely present, as infinite, immutable, immense, universal. It is the last because it is the first: for the first of Beings must necessarily have created for Himself all the others; He has become their end, as He was their beginning; Alpha becomes Omega. He never ceases to be present, because He is eternal. In fact, the Eternal cannot be enclosed within the limits of time; He cannot occupy successively the divers intervals of duration: for Him then there is neither past nor future, but a continual present. He is infinite because He is simple. In fact, where the essence is most simple, there also is the force the most intense; and the more intense the force, the more does its energy approach the infinite. He is immutable, because He is always in action: Being in action is nothing other than Pure or Absolute Act; now, Absolute Act can acquire nothing new, can lose nothing of that which is in it: consequently it can undergo no change, it is immutable. He is immense, because He is perfect; if He is perfect, we can conceive nothing in which He does not excel; excellency in magnitude is what we name immensity. He is universal because He is one: for Unity is the primal element of all multiplicity. Such Unity is the cause, efficient, exemplar, final, of all things: the Being of whom we speak is then universal, not as the essence of all that exists, but as the principle, the sufficient reason, the beneficent author of all essences.

It is time to pass on to the second consideration, the trinity of persons, which must be concluded from the very idea of good. The Absolute Being is infinitely good, since He is perfect, and hence nothing could be better. And, reciprocally, we cannot suppose that the infinitely good Being does not exist, since it is better to exist than not to exist. Now, we cannot contemplate Him in the plenitude of His existence without coming to perceive that He is triune as He is one. The Supreme Good must in fact be supremely communicative. But there could be on His part no supreme communication if He did not communicate His entire substance to Him into whom He flows over. The communication must be substantial and personal, actual and interior, natural and voluntary, free and necessary, incessant and complete. Such, however, is not that which is accomplished in creation: for it is enclosed in time and in space, which are no more than a point in presence of the illimitable and ever-during Goodness. There must then be from all eternity, in the very bosom of the Sovereign Good, a production, consubstantial, as is that operated by way of generation and procession; whence results the equality of the persons produced. The Eternal Principle, eternally acting, begets a Principle equal to Himself, and from these Two proceeds a Third; and these Three are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is necessary to the realization of that entire pouring forth of Himself, an essential perfection without which the Sovereign Good would not exist. Thus, in the contemplation of the Supreme Goodness, which is endless Act, the limitless expansion of a love at once voluntary and necessary—in the very idea of that Good essentially communicative, are found the premises whence we may elicit the dogma of the Trinity.[1]

IV. Man.

I. Nature of the Soul.—St. Bonaventura, "Breviloquium."

The teaching of theology in this regard may be summed up in a few words. The soul of man is a form, existing, living, intelligent, and free. Existing, not by itself, nor as an emanation from the infinite essence, but by the divine operation, which from nothingness made it pass into being;—Living, not with a mortal life borrowed from the exterior world, but with a life proper to itself and having no end;—Intelligent, for it conceives created things, and the Creator Himself, whose image it bears;—Free, that is, exempt from constraint in the exercise of its reason and its will. . . .

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[1] In this fragment, which is not given as a demonstration, but as a justification of the Christian dogma, the holy doctor sums up, but without developing them, the proofs scattered through the writings of the Fathers. We must not then be surprised that he does not show why the divine communication stops with the Holy Spirit. Theologians adduce several reasons for this, one of which is, that Power, Intelligence, and Love, constitute in their triplicity the entire essence of spirits: so that nothing can be added to them, as nothing can be taken away.

We come now to the philosophical development of these dogmas. The First Principle, who is sovereignly happy and good, desires through His goodness to communicate His happiness to all creatures; not to those alone whom He has made spiritual and nearest to Himself, but also to those that are sunk in the lowest depths of matter. Now, He acts upon these lower creatures by means of intermediaries which connect them with the higher: He has laid down for Himself this general order of things. He has then rendered capable of happiness, not only the pure spirits forming the angelic choirs, but likewise spirit united to matter, that is to say, the soul of man. And, as the possession of happiness is glorious only when it comes as a recompense, since recompense presupposes merit, and as merit could not exist without liberty of action, there has been given to the soul a liberty which no constraint can destroy. In fact, the will cannot be violated by aggressions from without, although by reason of the

Fall it has become weak and prone to sin. If the soul is capable of felicity, it is capable of possessing God. The soul must lay hold on Him by the faculties at its disposal, and first by the intellect, which, after having conceived the infinite, will readily comprehend finite things. It is characteristic of true felicity that it cannot be lost: consequently, it can be bestowed only upon incorruptible natures. That which is happy is immortal: the soul must then live an endless life. Finally, since it derives its felicity from a cause external to itself, and yet is immortal, it is dependent and variable in its mode of being, while remaining incorruptible in its being. It follows that it exists neither by itself, nor as an emanation from the divine essence, for then it would be unchangeable; nor by the action of the secondary causes of the exterior world, for then it would be corruptible. It is, then, through the creative operation that it has received existence. . . . Thus felicity, considered as the supreme end of the soul, requires in it the combination of all the attributes comprised in the definition proposed above. To still farther explain the first term, which may perhaps appear obscure, we must say that the soul endowed with immortality may be separated from the perishable body which it inhabits; that if it is called a form, it is by no means an abstract conception, but a distinct reality; and that it is united to the body not merely as the essence to the substance, but as the motor to the thing moved.

II. Of the Faculties of the Soul in General.—St. Bonaventura, Ibidem.

The soul, in its union with the body, constitutes the whole man: it makes him exist; it also makes him live, feel, and understand. We may consequently recognize in it a threefold power, vegetative, sensitive, intellectual. By its vegetative power, it presides over generation, nutrition, and growth. By its sensitive power, it grasps that which is sensible, retains that which it has grasped, combines what it has retained. It grasps by means of the five exterior senses, which correspond to the five elements of the material world; it retains by means of the memory; it combines and divides by means of the imagination, in which is found the power of combining impressions received. By its intellectual power, it discerns the true, repels the evil, and tends to the good. It discerns the true by the rational instinct; it repels evil by the irascible instinct; it tends to the good by the concupiscible instinct.

But discernment supposes knowledge; aversion and appetite are affections: the soul will then be by turns *knowing* and *affective*. Now the true may be considered from two points of view, either as true or as good. The true and the good are eternal or transitory: hence the faculty of knowing, which we name intellect or reason, may be subdivided into speculative and practical intellect, into inferior and superior reason. These names indicate rather different functions than distinct powers. The affections may be inclined in the same direction in two different manners: by a natural movement, or by a deliberate choice. This is why the faculty of willing is divided into natural will and a will of choice. And, as free choice results from a deliberation in which discernment is exercised, it follows that free will is the common work of the reason and the will; so that it unites in itself all the intellectual forces of man. St. Augustine has said the same: "When we speak of free will, it is not a part of the soul which we so designate, but indeed the soul entire."

III. Memory, Intellect, and Will, Considered in Their Especial Functions.—St. Bonaventura, "Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum," cap. iii.

I. The office of memory is to retain, that when needed they may be re-presented, not only ideas of actual, corporeal, perishable things, but also those of things successive, simple, eternal. To begin with, memory keeps for us the recollections of the past, the conceptions of the present, and the previsions of the future. Further, in it are found the most indecomposable ideas, such as the elements of discrete and continuous quantities, unity, the point, the moment, without which it would be impossible to call to mind numbers, space, and duration, which are composed of these. Finally, it preserves invariable the unvarying axioms of the sciences: for these we cannot so far forget, except in case of insanity, that on hearing them propounded, we would not immediately assent, as to truths recognized, familiar, and, so to speak, natural. We experience this when asked to pronounce upon a proposition such as: The whole of anything is greater than a part of the same. Now, in the first place, as memory embraces the past, the present, and the future, it bears the image of eternity, which contains all times in an indivisible present. In the second place, since it contains indecomposable ideas, we must conclude that it is not modified solely by the material impressions received from the exterior world; but that it has within itself simple forms which have been impressed upon it, from on high, which could not enter by the gates of the senses, nor take on sensible features. Thirdly, from its fidelity in retaining axioms, it results that it is aided by a light which does not waver, and which always makes it see unvarying truths under an unchanging aspect. . . .

II. The function of intellect is to comprehend isolated terms, propositions, reasonings. The intellect comprehends the meaning of terms when it knows their respective definitions. Now, the definition of each term is to be made by another term more general, which in turn will be defined by a third still more extended, until we reach those terms which are the broadest of all, and without which it would be impossible to define anything. Thus, if we were devoid of the general idea of Being, we could not grasp the definition of any particular being. . . . But Being may be conceived as defective or perfect, relative or absolute, in potentiality or in act, transitory or permanent, dependent or free, secondary or primal, simple or compound. . . . And, as defects are negative terms perceivable only by help of the corresponding positive terms, the intellect could not analyze the idea of any created being, defective, relative, compound, transitory, unless it had the idea of a being, complete, absolute, simple, eternal, in whom are contained the reasons of things. . . . The intellect comprehends propositions, then, especially when it recognizes them as certainly true, that is, when it knows that it cannot err in adhering to them. This infallibility supposes that the truth cannot be *otherwhere*, that truth does not change place, that it is immovable. But the intellect, itself subject to change, cannot be assured of this perfect immutability except by the aid of an unalterable light which beams forth unceasingly, and which cannot be a mere creature; which consequently must be that light which enlightens every man coming into this world, the Divine Word. Finally, the intellect is sure that it comprehends a reasoning, when it sees the conclusion result necessarily from the premises. Now the necessity of the conclusion remains the same, whether the premises rest upon facts necessary or contingent, real or merely possible. "If the man runs, he moves." The consequence does not cease to be true, even if the man does not run, or if indeed he no longer exists. Thus logical necessity does not depend upon the real and material existence of things in nature; neither does it depend upon their imaginary existence in human thought: but it requires their ideal existence in the eternal exemplars according to which the Divine Artist labors, and which are reflected in all His works. Thus, as St. Augustine says, the torch which illumines our reasonings is kindled at the focus of infinite truth, whereto its light leads us back. It follows that the intellect is in relation with infinite truth; for, without the assistance received from that truth, it could obtain no certitude. Hence we are able to find the truth which teaches us, if concupiscences from within, and appearances from without, do not interpose themselves between our gaze and the August Master, always present in the depths of our souls.

III. The will in its free action passes successively through three stages, which are: deliberation, judgment, and desire. Deliberation has for its end, to examine which of two objects is the better. But, of two objects, one can be called the better, only by reason of a greater resemblance to a third which is perfectly good: moreover, resemblance is appreciated by comparison, which in turn supposes some knowledge of the objects compared. . . . Hence the will which is deliberating, takes as its starting point an innate idea of perfect Goodness. Judgment can be pronounced only in accordance with a law. But one cannot confidently judge according to the text of a law, if one is not already sure of the justice of its provisions; otherwise, it would be necessary to suspend judgment, and first judge the law itself. Now, the soul is its own judge. Hence the law according to which it must judge, and which is not to be judged by it,—that law which is in it, is yet distinct from it, and comes to it from on high. And as nothing is higher than the soul, if not He whose work the soul is, we may conclude that the will, in the moment of judging, takes as its *point d'appui* the Divine Law. Finally, desire is proportioned to the attraction exercised by the thing desired. Of all things, that which exerts the most lively attraction is felicity; and felicity can be acquired only by the accomplishment of our last end, that is, by the possession of the Sovereign Good. Desire, then, tends necessarily toward the Sovereign Good, or at least toward whatever is related to it by some analogy, toward whatever in some features represents it.

IV. Mutual Relations of the Physical and the Moral.—"Compendium Theologicæ Veritatis," lib. II., cap. lviii., liv.[1]

The disposition of the parts, the sum total of which constitutes the human body, presents numerous variations, which, skilfully interpreted, seem to correspond to the divers dispositions of the soul. . . . Our masters in this art of interpretation are Aristotle, Avicenna, Constantine, Palemon, Loxus, Palemotius. We shall follow in their tracks.

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[1] This work has had the honor of being attributed in turn to the most illustrious doctors of the School: Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Sutton, Hugh of Strasburg (see the *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, t. XIX.). The opinion which holds St. Bonaventura to be its author is founded: 1st, on the analogy between the ideas and expressions of the *Compendium* and those of the *Breviloquium*; 2d, on the testimony of two old manuscripts in the Vatican Library.

To begin with the complexions, we must perceive that melancholy complexions bear the impress of sadness and gravity; the contrary qualities pertain to the sanguine; the bilious show themselves inclined to anger; the phlegmatic, to sleepiness and sloth. Sex does not fail to exercise a powerful influence: men are impetuous in their movements, friendly to intellectual labors, and steadfast in presence of danger. Women are timid and compassionate.

The bigness of the head, when disproportioned, is ordinarily an indication of stupidity: its extreme smallness betrays want of judgment and of memory. A flat head, depressed on the top, bespeaks a lack of self-restraint in mind and heart; elongated and shaped like a hammer, it has all the marks of foresight and circumspection. A narrow forehead bespeaks an indocile intelligence and bestial appetites; too broad, it would indicate but a small share of discernment. . . . If it is square and of good proportions, it is stamped with the seal of wisdom, perhaps of genius.

Eyes blue and bright express boldness and vigilance; those which seem dull and wavering disclose the habit of strong drink and gross pleasures. Those which are black, without admixture of any other shade, point to a weak and ungenerous nature. . . . Such as are small, red, and protruding, ordinarily accompany a body without address and an unbridled tongue. But when the glance is piercing, although veiled by a slight humidity, it announces veracity in speech, prudence in counsel, promptitude in action. . . . A well-cut mouth, closed by thin lips, the upper slightly projecting beyond the lower, expresses noble and courageous sentiments. A small mouth, with thin edges pressed together to restrain their movement, manifests cunning, the habitual resource of weakness. Half-open and hanging lips are a symptom of inertia and incapacity. This observation may be repeated upon the examination of various animals.

Short and delicate hands betoken energy and skill. Long, hooked fingers denote intemperance at table and in words. . . . Men who walk with long strides are almost always endowed with a lofty character and indefatigable activity. Those whom we see hurrying their steps, bent forward and carrying their heads low, wear the certain appearances of avarice, wiliness, and timidity.

In general, when all the parts of the body keep their natural proportions, and there reigns among them a perfect harmony of shape, size, color, position, and movement, it is allowable to presume a no less happy disposition of the moral faculties; and reciprocally, the disproportion of the members readily permits us to suspect a similar disorder in the intellect and the will. We might even say with Plato, that our features often wear a resemblance to some animal whose ways are reproduced in our conduct. . . . But we must above all remember that these external forms do not set the mark of necessity upon the internal characters corresponding to them; it is not in their power to destroy the liberty of the soul of which they indicate the tendencies. Moreover, the value of these indications is only conjectural, and sometimes uncertain, so that in this matter there would be temerity in making a precipitate judgment. For the indication may be found to be the result of accident; and, even if it be the work of nature, the inclination which it represents may yield to the ascendency of a contrary habit, or may correct itself under the moderating restraint of reason.

V. Society.

I. Philosophy of the Law.—St. Thomas of Aquin.

Summa, 1ª 2æ, qq. xc.–cxvii. "de Legibus."[1]

1. LAWS CONSIDERED IN THEIR ESSENCE.—QUÆST. 90.

Four questions are proposed: 1. Whether Law is a dependency of reason?—2. What is the end of Law?—3. What is its origin?—4. What ought to be its promulgation?

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[1] Only by mutilating it, have we been enabled here to insert this treatise *de Legibus*, which in its entirety forms perhaps the finest system of

1. Law is a rule, a measure set to our actions; it is a motive which induces us to act, or which deters us from acting. In fact, it is called Law (*Lex*, *ligare*) because it binds, obliging us to a determination which it renders necessary. Now, the rule and measure of human actions is reason, which is also their first principle, since it belongs to reason to direct the effort toward the end in view; and the consideration of the end to be attained is precisely, as Aristotle tells us, the first principle of action. But, in every order of things, that which is principle is also rule and measure: thus unity measures numbers; and thus the motion of the heavens rules the motion of this nether world. We may then conclude that Law is a dependency of reason.

2. As reason is the principle of human actions, so again in reason itself should there be found an idea which will in its turn be the principle of our other ideas, and on which the Law will, in a more absolute manner, depend. Now, the idea which presides over all our operations, which governs and directs all the decisions of practical life, is the idea of a last end. But the last end of human existence is felicity or happiness. The Law must

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the philosophy of Law ever traced by a Christian hand. The omissions will be scrupulously indicated; they at least invite the reader to recur to the unabridged text.

then tend to realize the conditions of happiness. Again, if the imperfect is to be subordinated to the perfect, and the part to the whole; if the isolated man is only a part of society, society being the perfect whole, the proper task of the Law will be to realize the conditions of the common felicity. And it is precisely in this sense that Aristotle, in the fifth book of his ethics, proclaims just and commendable all institutions which produce or preserve happiness amid political relations. . . . Consequently, the general good is the supreme end to which all laws are necessarily coordinated.

3. But, while recognizing that the destination of the Law is to procure the general good, we must also admit that the care of insuring this destination belongs to the many, or to him who holds the place of the many. The laws will thus be the work of the whole people, or of the public person charged with the interests of the people, for always and everywhere the charge of disposing all things with a view to accomplishing the general end, falls upon the one who is therein especially, immediately, and entirely interested.

4. As has been said, the Law is imposed by way of a rule and a measure: now, rule and measure are laid down by applying them to the objects which are to be subjected to them. Hence, to obtain the obligatory force which characterizes it, the Law must be applied to those whom it is to govern. But this appli-

cation, this first effort of the Law upon minds, is brought about by making it known to all by means of promulgation. It follows that promulgation is necessary to give force to Law. Thus, from the four preceding considerations, we may deduce a satisfactory definition, and say finally: The Law is a rational ordinance, tending to the common good, emanating from him who is charged with the interests of the community, and promulgated by his care.[1]

2. ON THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LAWS.—QUÆST. 92.

We shall consider successively: 1. The Eternal Law;—2. The Natural Law;—3. Human Laws.

1. Law, as proved above, is the expression of the practical reason in the thought of the sovereign who governs a complete society. Now, supposing that the world is ruled by the counsels of Providence, a proposition whose truth has elsewhere been sufficiently established, it is evident that the Divine Reason governs the great society of the universe. Consequently, the economy of the government of things, such as it exists in God,

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[1] "Rationis ordinatio ad bonum commune ab eo qui curam communitatis habet promulgata." *Ratio, Ordinatio*, two weighty words used in the language of the School to designate the Law, which words admirably set forth its dual character, intellectual and moral. We have kept the latter in our modern word *ordinance*; the first has been preserved in the Italian *ragione*.

the Sovereign of the universe, has truly the character of a law. And, as the conceptions of the Divine Reason are not subordinated to the succession of time, but enjoy an immutable eternity, as is written in the Book of Proverbs, it follows that this Law is to be called Eternal.

2. If the Law is rule and measure, it can be viewed from the standpoint of him who imposes it, or from the standpoint of him who is subject to it; for a thing cannot be ruled and measured, without in some way partaking of the measure and rule. If, then, all that is subject to Divine Providence is ruled and measured by the eternal law, it is evident that all beings in some manner participate in this supreme law; that is to say, they receive from its application a natural impulsion toward the acts which are proper to them, toward the ends assigned them. But, among all creatures, the rational creature is subjected to Providence in so much the more excellent a fashion that it co-operates in the work of Providence by providing for itself and for others. It, then, is admitted to a more abundant participation in the eternal reason, which impresses upon it a continual tendency toward its true destiny; this participation of the rational creature in the eternal law is called the Natural Law.

3. We have often repeated that the Law is the expression of the practical reason: now the practical reason and the speculative reason follow nearly the same path in their developments.

Both always descend from principles to conclusions. As, then, the speculative reason has some indemonstrable principles naturally known, and as it draws from them conclusions in the various sciences of which the knowledge is not given by nature, but is laboriously acquired by study; so, likewise, the precepts of the natural law are so many general principles, evident of themselves, whence the practical reason is to evolve particular ordinances. These ordinances, being the work of the human mind, are to be called Human Laws, provided they unite in themselves the characters of which the combination constitutes law. This is why Cicero, in his work on Rhetoric, sets forth that Law had its origin in nature; that later, certain observances determined by reason were introduced into custom; and that finally, the institutions founded on nature and tested by custom, were sanctioned by the terror of the laws, and consecrated by religion.

3. Of the Eternal Law.—Quæst. 93.

It is asked: 1st. What is the Eternal Law in itself?—2d. Whether all temporal laws must be derived from it?

1. As the artist bears in his intellect the plan of the works which will issue from his hands, so in the intellect of him who governs, ought to be laid down in advance the order that he will establish in regard to the people entrusted to his care. The preconceived plan of works of art is called rule or model, the pre-established order of the government of society takes the name of

Law. ... Now God, the Creator of all things, is to them what the artist is to his works; moreover, He governs, and to some extent directs them in all their motions and all their acts. Hence, the design of the Divine Wisdom, in so far as it has presided over the formation of creatures, takes the name of model, of type, or idea; in so far as it determines the striving of beings toward the accomplishment of their destiny, it takes the name of law; whence it follows that the Eternal Law is simply the order according to which the Divine Wisdom causes all the forces of creation to move.

2. Law is order in movement; now, in a series of co-ordinated movements, the power of the second motor must be derived from the power of the first, for the second motor enters on its functions only inasmuch as it is itself moved. This is why in every hierarchy the economy of the government is transmitted from the sovereign power to the secondary powers; and, as in works of art, the idea to be realized descends from the artist who directs the works to the workmen who execute them, so the order to be followed in the relations of civil life descends from the king to the inferior magistrates. If, then, the Eternal Law is the economy of universal government in the thought of God, in whom the supreme power resides, it is the source whence all systems of government directed by subaltern powers, whence, in one word, all human laws, must descend. And this, in fact, is the doctrine of St. Augustine, in Book II., *de Libero Arbitrio.*

4. Of the Natural Law.—Quæst. 94.

It is asked: 1st. What are the precepts of the Natural Law? —2d. Whether this Law is one and the same for all men?

1. The precepts of the Natural Law have for the practical reason the same value that indemonstrable axioms have for the speculative reason: this results from the foregoing observations. . . . The first indemonstrable axiom is this: That we cannot at one and the same time affirm and deny one and the same proposition. This axiom rests upon the notion of Being, the first presented to the mind. . . . But, as the notion of Being is the first which presents itself to the speculative reason, so the notion of Good is that which offers itself before all others to the practical reason. . . . The first precept of the natural law is then this: That we must procure good, and avoid evil. And there are as many precepts in the law of nature as there are cases in which the practical reason spontaneously recognizes the presence of good and of evil. . . . But if it is the characteristic of good to be the natural end of things, reason will recognize this character in all the objects toward which nature inclines us. . . . The order of these innate inclinations will then determine the order which obtains among the precepts of the natural law. There is first in man an elementary inclination, proceeding from that lower nature which he has in common with all creatures. All creatures tend to self-preservation; and consequently, the means necessary to

preserve life and to keep death at a distance, enter within the domain of the natural law. In the second place, man is inclined to more complicated actions, the distinctive attribute of that nature which he shares with the animals; and this is why we comprise under the natural law the union of the sexes and the education of children. . . . Thirdly, man feels himself called to another kind of good, corresponding to the superior, intelligent, rational nature, possessed by him distinctively. He feels the need of knowing God, of living in society; and the natural law provides for the satisfaction of these requirements, by stigmatizing voluntary ignorance, by recommending an innocent life, in fine, by multiplying wise prescriptions which it would take us too long here to enumerate.

2. The natural law sanctions all the primal inclinations of human nature; but, among these the one that especially distinguishes and honors us, is the inclination which leads us to take reason as the guide of our actions. Now, it is the regular course of reason to go from the general to the particular. However, while the speculative reason, occupying itself with necessary facts, infallibly encounters truth, both in the principles it lays down and in the conclusions deduced, the practical reason is busied with human actions, which belong among contingent things; and, although it still partakes of metaphysical necessity by its general maxims, as soon as it descends to the applications, it there

finds contingency. Thus, in speculation, the truth is always one for all, even though it be not always equally well known. . . . In practice, justice, of which the general maxims are identical, unchangeable, evident for all, may waver and become obscure in its application of them. Hence the natural law, if we stop at its principles, is everywhere the same in itself and in the ideas we form of it; but if we consider the particular rules which it dictates according to the diversity of circumstances, it may vary; it may vary first in itself, by yielding to new conditions which modify its ordinary severity, then also in the ideas conceived of it, according as the reason permits itself to be more or less disturbed by the passions, by perverted habits, or by an untoward disposition of the organs. It is easy to cite examples: the law which prescribes the restitution of a deposit, undergoes restriction in case the depositor should reclaim his treasure to make a criminal use of it. The law forbidding theft knows no exception, but, by certain nations, it has not been recognized: the Germans, according to Cæsar, did not regard as culpable the abstraction of the property of others.

5. OF HUMAN LAWS.—QUÆST. 95–97.

We shall discuss successively: 1st. Their Utility;—2d. Their Authority;—3d. Their Mutability.

1. Man has received from nature a happy aptitude for virtue; but he is not able to attain to the perfection of virtue otherwise

than by subjecting himself to a discipline. It is with moral needs as it is with physical necessities; he can satisfy these only by obliging himself to regular labor, of which he possesses the instruments, to wit, intelligence and hands; whereas the animals find without calculation and without trouble, food around them and clothing upon them. Now, we could scarcely expect man to be sufficient to himself in the exercise of this beneficent discipline; for its chief object is to withdraw him from the illicit enjoyments toward which he feels himself attracted, especially during youth, that is, at the age when correction is the most efficacious and direction the most lasting. He must then receive from others that discipline which alone leads to virtue. For those whom a suitable disposition, a wise habit, or better still, divine grace, readily inclines to good, the paternal discipline, proceeding by way of advice, is sufficient; but for vicious characters, who are not to be persuaded by words, the menaces of force must be opposed to the seductions of evil. Broken against this salutary obstacle, evil wills will cease to disturb the common tranquillity; they will adopt a better course, they will retain through habit the mode of conduct prescribed by fear, they will return to the ways of wisdom. Now, the only discipline which has the power to constrain, because it is accompanied by the fear of punishment, is the discipline of the laws; whence we must conclude that human laws are required for the maintenance of peace and the propagation of virtue among men. In support of this proposition, we may invoke the testimony of Aristotle, Book First: On Politics. . . .

2. Laws of human institution may be just or unjust. Just laws oblige in the interior court of conscience; they obtain this binding power from the eternal law, whence they are derived. . . . Now, laws deserve to be called just when they fulfil the conditions of justice, by the end to which they are directed, by the author from whom they emanate, by the form which they observe; that is to say, when they tend to the general good, when they do not exceed the power of the law-giver, when they distribute among all the members, with proportioned equalness, the burdens which, in the interest of all, each one must bear.

Man, in fact, being a member of society, belongs to it as a part to the whole; and nature sometimes requires that a part suffer that the whole may be saved. In the same way, the laws distribute to each member of society the burdens necessary for the preservation of social order; and, if they do this in equitable proportions, they are just, obligatory for the conscience; we may call them legitimate laws. The laws may be unjust in two ways: by opposing the relative good of man, or by opposition to the absolute good, which is God. In the first case they may trespass by their end, by their author, or by their form: by their end, when the prince has reckoned them in the interest of his pride or of his cupidity, without regard to the public good; by their author, when he who dictated them has overstepped the limits of the power of which he is the depositary; by their form, if the burdens imposed, even for the common utility, are not equally distributed. Laws thus made are no more than acts of violence; for, according to St. Augustine, we may not honor with the name of laws those which are unjust. Consequently, they do not bind before the interior tribunal, unless perhaps in consideration of the disturbance and scandal which transgression would bring with it, a sufficient motive to determine a man to abandon his right; this is the counsel of the Gospel: "To him that will take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also to him." In the second case, when laws are in opposition to the absolute good, that is, to God, as were those of the tyrants, when idolatry was erected into a mandate, it is by no means permitted to obey them. ... "We must obey God rather than men."

3. Human laws are so many ordinances by which reason endeavors to direct the actions of men; and hence there are two causes which justify change in the legislations of this nether world. The first of these causes is found in the mobility of reason itself; the second, in the mutability of the circumstances amid which live the men whose actions are to be directed. And first, it is in the nature of reason to go by degrees from the imperfect to the perfect: thus, in the speculative sciences, we see that the

early philosophers left defective doctrines, which were amended and completed in schools formed subsequently. The same has been the course of practical knowledge: the first persons who employed their talents in the service of society, not being capable of embracing at a single glance all the interests to be contented, necessarily left behind them inadequate institutions. There was then need to modify these afterwards, and to replace them by others, which would have fewer omissions, but which yet would not be secure from subsequent reforms. . . In the second place, just innovations may be introduced into the law at the same time that correlative innovations are wrought in the condition of men; for, the variety of institutions must correspond to the diversity of conditions. St. Augustine gives an excellent example of this.

If the people for whom the laws are laid down, are quiet in their behavior, serious in their thoughts, and vigilant in looking after their true interests, they will properly be allowed the right of choosing the magistrates entrusted with the administration of public affairs. But if the same people, gradually corrupted so far that their suffrage becomes venal, end by confiding the cares of government to dishonorable men, the power of conferring offices will very wisely be taken away from them, that it may be placed in its entirety in the hands of the small number of good men still remaining.

Politics. St. Thomas : "Summa," Prima Secundæ, q. 105 ; Prima Secundæ, q. 42. "De Eruditione Principum," l. I., 4 ; VI., 3.

1. Of the Best Form of Government.

Two things are necessary to found a durable order in cities and in nations. The first is the admission of all to a share in the general government, so that all may be interested in the maintenance of the public peace which has become their work; the second is the selection of a political form in which the powers may be happily combined. There exists, in fact, as Aristotle teaches, several forms of government. However, one chiefly distinguishes royalty, which is the sovereignty of a single man, himself subject to the laws of virtue; and aristocracy, which is the authority of the best among the citizens, also exercised within the limits of justice. Thus, the happiest combination of powers is that which would place at the head of the nation a virtuous prince; which would array under him a certain number of notable persons empowered to govern according to the rules of equity; and which in taking these persons from all classes, and in subjecting them to the suffrages of the entire people, would thus associate the whole of society in the cares of government. Such a State would combine in its beneficent organization, royalty, represented by a single head; aristocracy, characterized by plurality of magistrates chosen from among the best citizens; and democracy, or the power of the people, shown by the election of the aforesaid magistrates, which would be carried out within the ranks of the people and by their voice. Now, this order is precisely that which the divine law established in Israel.

2. Of Sedition.

The inevitable effect of sedition is to violate the unity of the people, of the city, or of the empire. If in this we follow St. Augustine, the people, according to the definition given by wise men, is by no means a fortuitous assemblage of any sort of a multitude; it is a society formed by the recognition of one and the same law and by community in the same interests. Hence it is the unity of laws and of interests that sedition threatens to dissolve. It follows that sedition, contrary to justice and to the common utility, must be condemned as a sin mortal in its nature, and so much the more grievous as the general good is to be preferred to the good of the individual. Now, the sin of sedition weighs first on those who have been its instigators, then on the turbulent men who have been its instruments and accomplices. Those, on the contrary, who have offered resistance and have fought for the public good, ought not to be dishonored by being called seditious persons, any more than those should be called quarrelsome persons who repel the aggression of an unjust quarrel.

But we must observe that a tyrannical government, that is, one which proposes as its end the personal gratification of the prince, and not the common happiness of the subjects, thereby ceases to be legitimate: Aristotle thus teaches, in the third book of the Ethics, and in the third of the Politics. Hence, the overturning of such a power has not the character of sedition, provided it is not attended with sufficient disorder to cause more evils than did the tyranny itself. Strictly speaking, it is the tyrant who deserves the appellation of a seditious person, by encouraging dissensions among the people that he may the more easily carry on his despotism. For a tyrannical government is one which is calculated in the exclusive interest of power, to the general injury of the people.

3. Of the Duties of the Prince.[1]

Society cannot attain to the supreme end assigned to it, without the concurrence of three sorts of means, namely: virtues, enlightenment, and external goods. The prince ought, then, to watch with wise solicitude over the cultivation of letters in his State, that they may flourish and that the number of learned and capable men may be multiplied. For, where science flourishes, where the fountains of learning flow freely forth, there sooner or later will instruction be disseminated among the people. Hence, to dissipate the darkness of ignorance which would shamefully envelop the face of the kingdom, it is important that the king should encourage letters by giving them favorable attention. Furthermore, if he were to refuse the necessary encouragement, if he did not wish his subjects to be instructed, he would cease to be a king, he would become a tyrant. A people has also need of pure manners and of virtues. For it is of small avail to know the end of human life by the light of the understanding, if disorderly appetites be not disciplined by the force of the will and redirected toward the attainment of the said end. It is, then, the prince's duty to maintain virtuous dispositions among his subjects. Finally, external goods may serve as instruments to procure the happiness of civil life. And consequently it is proper that kings and princes should govern their states and their cities in such a way as to procure for them an abundance of that wealth which may contribute to the general good.

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[1] This fragment is not by St. Thomas of Aquin; it is extracted from the book *de Regimine Principum* (lib. III., p. 2, c. viii.), written by the B. Egidius Colonna, Cardinal-archbishop of Bourges, a disciple of the Angelic Doctor.

4. OF NOBILITY.

It is a frequent error among men to think themselves noble because they are born of a noble family. This error may be met in several ways. First, if we consider the creative cause whose works we are—God; by being Himself the author of our race, He doubtless ennobled it all. . If we look at the second and created course, the first parents from whom we descend, they are the same for us all; all have received from Adam and Eve one and the same nobility, one and the same nature. We do not read that the Lord in the beginning made two men; one of silver, to be the ancestor of noblemen; and the other of clay, to be the father of laborers. But He made a single man formed from the slime of the earth, and through him we are brethren. . . . The same ear furnishes the flour and the bran. The bran is a wretched food thrown to swine, and from the flour is made a choice bread fit to be placed on the table of kings. The rose and the thorn grow upon the same stem. The rose is a noble creature, beneficent to him who approaches her, shedding her perfumes in sweet profusion round about her. The thorn, on the contrary, is a mean excrescence which tears the hands of those imprudent enough to touch it. Thus from the same stock two men may be born, one a villain and the other noble. One, as the rose, will do good to all around him, and that one will be noble; the other, like the thorn, will wound those who come near him, until, like it, he shall be cast into the fire, but into eternal fire; and the latter will be the villain. . . . If all that proceeds from a nobleman should inherit his nobility, animals living in his hair, and other natural superfluities engendered in him, would be ennobled in their fashion. . . . The philosophers themselves have recognized that nobility is not acquired by descent. What is a chevalier, a slave, a freedman? These are, answers Seneca, so many titles created by pride or by injustice. Plato said: "There is no king who has not had slaves among his ancestors; there is no slave who is not the descendant of kings." ... It is a fine thing not to have fallen away from the example of noble ancestors; but it is an especially fine thing to have rendered an humble birth illustrious by great actions. ... I repeat, then, with St. Jerome, that nothing appears to me desirable in this presumed hereditary nobility, except that noblemen are constrained to virtue by the shame of derogating. True nobility is that of the soul, according to the words of the poet:

"Nobilitas sola est animum quæ moribus ornat."[1]

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[1] This chapter and the following are extracted from the treatise *de Eruditione Principum.* St. Thomas, who wrote the above, belonged to the illustrious family of the counts of Aquin, one of the foremost in the Two Sicilies. Space does not permit us here to insert a remarkable chapter from the treatise *de Regimine Principum* (different from the work of the same name previously cited), which is generally attributed to him. In it he lays down the duties of the people in the presence of tyranny: "The tyrant, if he abides within certain limits, ought to be borne with for fear of greater evils: if he exceeds all measure, he can be deposed, even condemned, by a regularly constituted power; but attempts against his person, the work either of individual fanaticism or of private vengeance, would remain inexcusable crimes." To complete the setting forth of the bold opinions of the doctors of those days, we must quote in addition the

5. OF TAXES.

The impiety of princes and lords who lay exorbitant taxes upon their subjects will easily be understood if we consider that they render themselves guilty at the same time of unfaithfulness toward men, ingratitude toward God, and contempt toward the angels. The lord owes to his subjects the same fidelity which he is allowed to exact from them: to fail in this is then felony. . . . We often hear noblemen excuse themselves, saying: "If this man did not belong to me, I might think I was sinning by maltreating him; but to maltreat that which belongs to me, I can see no sin in that, at least no grievous sin." We might tell them that their power thus conceived would be like that of the devil. For the devil is a cruel lord, who pays with afflictions the devotion of his subjects, and treats them so much the worse as he is the better served by them. What man in his senses would ever think it less criminal to make war upon his own than upon strangers? Who does not know that it is treason to desert the cause of a friend? Now, according to the words of the Wise Man,

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following passage from a sermon of St. Bonaventura's (*Hexæmeron V.*): "We see nowadays a great scandal in governments; for one would not confide a ship to a pilot who was a novice in the handling of the helm, and yet we place at the head of nations those who are ignorant of the art of ruling them. So, woe to empires, when the right of succession places children on the throne!"

the prince ought to look upon his subjects as poor friends given him by heaven. Before receiving the homage of the poor man, he owed him good faith and devotion, as to his brother in religion, and that same poor man, doing homage, did by no means absolve the prince from his primal obligation; rather has the new act intervened to draw still closer the previous bond. How, then. defend from the accusation of unfaithfulness him who oppresses his subjects? He also gives proof of ingratitude toward God. For God has honored the powerful man, by raising him above all; and he, on the contrary, dishonors God in the poor whom he humiliates. He imitates the soldiers charged with leading the Saviour to death, who took the reed from His hands that with it they might strike His head. The reed is the figure of the temporal power which the great have received from the hand of the Most High, and which they use to strike Him in the person of the poor. Finally, there is the contemning of the angels. In truth, if Providence has confided the weak and the little to the care of the strong in this world, it has not willed that the former should be at the mercy of the latter; it has given them celestial guardians. Every man has his angel, to whose care he is confided. Upon that angel, then, fall the wrongs heaped upon the wretched here below; and from the angel they fall back upon God Himself, whose minister the angel is.

VI. Nature.

The Presence of God in All the Grades of Creation.—Unity and Diversity.—Universal Attraction.—Albert the Great, "De Causis et Processu Universi," lib. II., tr. IV., cap. i. and ii.

1. We shall treat of how the First Cause rules all created beings, without being confounded with them. For if some of these beings seem to rule others which are subordinated to them, they do it in virtue of a borrowed power. What is it, in fact, to rule beings, if not to conduct them to that plenitude of existence which is their end? Now, for each one of them the plenitude of existence consists in the sum total of the conditions without which it could not reach its relative perfection, accomplish its destiny, exercise the especial function proper to it. But to conduct a being to perfection, to make it pass from potentiality to act, is the work of the generating principle which is in it, and which impresses upon it its specific form. Thus the informing power which comes from the father, fashions the embryo in the womb of the mother so far as to give it the living form of humanity; then it strengthens and develops the body of the child, that it may be brought to the perfect proportions of the age of manhood, when the completion of the organs allows of the complete action of the corresponding faculties. . . . Always, in the series of things, that which

follows is explained by that which precedes: the second is *informed* by the first. All are mutually bound together and necessarily remount to the Sovereign Cause, in which existence and essence are one, and which, ceaselessly acting around itself, forms, perfects, and rules all parts of the universe. . . . Now, the First Cause acts because It *is*, and not in virtue of any borrowed force. It is not divided into two parts, one active and the other inert; it does not, then, lose in its action that unchangeable unity which is in its nature. It is not thus with the secondary agents composed of existence and essence, of potentiality and act, consequently, divisible. . . . A composite agent cannot modify the objects which are subjected to it, except by giving to them its form, by communicating to them its existence, while retaining in itself its essence entire. In fact, action supposes contact, contact necessitates communication; and there can be no other communication than that of existence, for essence is incommunicable. Since then the First Cause acts by its essence, we must conclude that it does not communicate itself, that is, that it is not confounded with the things which it creates, forms, and rules. Hence, these things come from it, but are not it, and we are right in blaming those who extend to creatures divine attributes. . . . Thus God, who is the First Cause, remains in His immutable unity without confounding Himself with His works. And yet He does not abandon them: He in a certain way accompanies them and encompasses them on every side by the immensity of His essence, by the presence of His light, by the power of His action.

2. From the considerations just set forth, we must conclude that the First Cause exerts upon all things one and the same influence. Since in it existence and essence are one, it is impossible to conceive it separated from its infinite perfections. Its perfections are then identical among themselves, and the effusion of them cannot vary. But though this effusion is unvarying as coming from on high, yet it is not received below in a like abundance by the divers beings upon which it is poured out. It fills them according to the unequal measure of their capacity, which is proportioned to the distance at which they are found; for some revolve in the vicinity of the First Cause, while others move at a great distance. All, then, participate according to their capacity in the effusion of the divine goodness and light; they are penetrated by the essence, by the presence, and by the power of the Creator. Now, these different distances, these degrees of nearness at which creatures are placed, constitute a hierarchic order, by means of which number is reduced to unity; so that we must herein recognize the work of the Eternal Wisdom; for such is the greatness of the perfections of God, that none among created objects could contain them entire. . . . At least He has willed that they should descend to the very depths of creation, and that there

should remain nothing so obscure or so low as not to enter in some manner into relation with the Divine Being.[1]

3. And if we ask whence comes the universal tendency of things toward the Divine Being, it is easy to answer by starting from the truths already demonstrated. In fact, we have amply proved that God penetrates all things with His light; and this light, in penetrating them, sketches in them an imperfect resemblance to God Himself. Now, according to the words of Boethius, like is attracted by that which it is like; for from it does it receive the power to subsist, growth, and perfection. Thence comes it that all things tend to God as to the Sovereign Good, as to the supreme end toward which all actions are co-ordinated. And there is nothing capable of exerting any attraction around itself, if it does not contain a divine property. When, then, any one complains that he has not met with the Sovereign Good, he errs:

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[1] The same thought is developed with perhaps greater clearness in the fourteenth chapter of the same book. "God knows Himself, and sheds abroad His light, which enlightens all things, and which, being reflected in them, leaves in them as it were an image of the Divinity. He wills Himself as universal principle, and in so doing He excites in all things a sort of love which inclines them toward the Divinity. He acts, and by His power He gives to all things the force to move toward the Divinity. This image, this love, this determining force, are, then, in all things, although in different conditions, according as we treat of brute matter, of plants, of animals, of man, or of pure intelligences."

he errs by reason of having attached himself, by imprudent appetites, to the signs and appearances of the Sovereign Good Itself. And yet these appearances and these signs reflect some image of the supreme reality, and it is through this alone that they attract and captivate the affection of men.[2]

II. Power of Nature; Powerlessness of Magic.—Possible Progress of Skill; Discoveries of Modern Times. — Roger Bacon, "de Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturæ et Nullitate Magiæ," cap. i.–vii.

1. Although nature is admirable in its operations, art, which modifies it and uses it as an instrument, shows itself more powerful than nature. Outside the works of nature and of art, nothing remains except prodigies above our reach, or spells beneath our dignity. . . . Such are jugglers who cheat our eyes by legerdemain, pythonesses, who, fetching their docile voices from stomach, throat, or palate, can at will make to be heard distant words, strange sounds, as though some invisible spirit were expressing itself by the medium of their organ. But, still more wicked than such impostors, are they who, contemning all phil-

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[2] The idea of attraction is perfectly expressed in this comparison employed by St. Dionysius the Areopagite: "God is called Love, in so much as He moves beings and draws them upward, as the stationary magnet attracts iron."

osophy and in despite of reason, call upon the evil spirit in order to obtain the accomplishment of their impotent will, who think to fetch him or to send him away by natural means, who offer him prayers and sacrifices. It would be incomparably more easy and more sure to ask from God and the angels the satisfaction of our just desires; for, if sometimes the evil spirits show themselves favorable to our apparent interests, it is for the punishment of our sins; but this happens still by the permission of God, who alone and with unshared power rules over the course of human destinies.

2. I will now recount some of the wonders contained in nature or produced by art, in which magic has no share, in order to prove how much beyond all comparison, they surpass magical inventions. For use in navigation, machines may be constructed such that the largest vessels, directed by a single man, shall traverse rivers and seas more rapidly than if they were filled with oarsmen; also, carriages may be made, which without horses, shall move with inconceivable swiftness.

It is possible to make an apparatus such that a man seated within it and moving artificial wings by means of a lever, may travel like a bird through the air. An instrument, three fingers long and as much in width, would be capable of lifting enormous weights; it might even serve to release captives from their prisons by enabling them to surmount at will the greatest heights.

There is another instrument by means of which a single hand can draw to itself bodies of considerable mass, in spite of the resistance of a thousand arms. Further, machines can be conceived by which a diver could without peril be taken down to the bottom of the waters. ... These things have been seen, either among the ancients, or in our own day, with the exception of the flying machine, the design of which has been thought out by a learned man well known to me. A multitude of other engines and useful appliances could be invented:—such as bridges which would span the broadest rivers without piers or any intermediate support.

3. But, among all the objects which claim our admiration, we ought especially to remark the play of light. We can combine transparent glasses and mirrors in such a way that unity seems to be multiplied, that a single man appears to be an army, and that we may make as many suns and moons to be seen as we desire. For the vapors diffused through the air are sometimes disposed in such a way that, by a curious reflection, they duplicate and even triplicate the disc of the moon or the sun. ... And it would be easy thus by sudden apparitions, to spread dismay in a city or in the army of an enemy. This contrivance will appear still easier if one considers that a system of transparent glasses may be constructed which can carry the eye near to distant objects, or make near ones seem to be far away; or which, indeed,

by displacing their images, can present them on any side that one desires. Thus from an incredible distance we may read the finest characters, or count the most indistinguishable objects. It is said that Cæsar by the aid of immense mirrors, saw from the height of the coasts of Gaul, several cities in Great Britain. By analogous processes, we might enlarge, lessen, or reverse the forms of bodies; we might deceive the sight by endless illusions. . . . The solar rays, skilfully conducted and gathered together in bundles by the power of refraction, are capable of kindling at the desired distance, objects exposed to their activity.

4. Other results, not less curious, may be obtained at less expense. Such are artificial fires for casting to a distance; these are composed of naphtha, rock-salt, and petroleum. . . . Such is also the Greek fire, in imitation of which a large number of combustibles are fabricated. . . . Means are not wanting to make lamps of which the wicks shall not consume away: for we know of bodies which burn without being consumed: talc, for instance, and the skin of the salamander. Art has its thunders, more formidable than thunder from the skies. A small quantity of matter, as big as one's thumb, occasions a terrible explosion accompanied by a vivid light, and this fact can be so repeated as to destroy a city or entire battalions. . . . The attraction which the magnet exerts upon iron, is in itself fertile in marvels unknown to the commonalty, known only to those whom science has initiated into

its ineffable shows. Now the property of the magnet is found elsewhere; it takes on an ever-increasing importance: gold, silver, and the other metals allow of being attracted by the stone which tests them. There is a spontaneous drawing together among mineral masses, among plants, among the dissected organs of animals. Having witnessed these wonders of nature, nothing henceforth astounds my faith either in the works of man or in the miracles of God.

5. The final degree of perfection to which human skill, aided by all the forces of creation, may attain, is the faculty of prolonging life. The possibility of a considerable prolongation is established by experience. An infallible means would consist in the continued and scrupulous observance of a regimen regulating food and drink, sleeping and waking, activity and rest, all the functions of the body, even the passions of the soul, down to the conditions of the surrounding atmosphere. This regimen is strictly determined by the precepts of medicine; . . . for the learned have ardently endeavored to extend by a hundred years or more the ordinary limits of human life, by delaying, or at least by diminishing, the ills of old age. However, they by no means ignore the existence of a set term, irrevocably fixed since the day of the first Fall: they simply seek to regain that term, by removing the accidental obstacles which stop the course of life. . . . If some one should object that neither Plato nor Aristotle, nor the great

Hippocrates nor Galen, was able to attain to this wonderful prolongation of life, I would answer, that those great men failed to attain several pieces of knowledge of a secondary interest, which have been found out by other thinkers coming after them. Aristotle may not have penetrated into the innermost secrets of nature; even as the learned men of the present day are themselves ignorant of many truths which will be familiar to the veriest novices among the scholars of future times.

APPENDIX No. I.

Extract from St. Thomas: "Opuscul. de Sensu Respectu Particularium et Intellectu Respectu Universalium."

"INDIVIDUATIO naturæ communis in rebus materialibus et corporalibus est ex materia corporali sub determinatis dimensionibus contenta. Universale autem est per abstractionem ab ejus modi materia, et materialibus conditionibus individuantibus. Patet ergo quod similitudo rei quæ recipitur in sensu repræsentat rem secundum quod est singularis, sed recepta in intellectu repræsentat rem secundum rationem naturæ universalis. ... Ipsa autem natura cui accidit intentio universitatis habet duplex esse: unum quidem materiale, secundum quod est in natura materiali, aliud autem immateriale, secundum quod est in intellectu. Primo quidem modo non potest advenire intentio universitatis, quia per materiam individuatur. Advenit ergo universalis intentio secundum quod abstrahitur a materia individuali: non potest autem abstrahi a materia individuali realiter sicut platonici posuerunt."

APPENDIX No. 2.

Second Sentence of Exile Issued Against Dante.

"Nos Cante de Cabriellibus de Eugubio, Potestas civitatis Florentie, infra scriptam condemnationis summam damus ac proferimus in hunc modum. D. Andream de Gherardinis, D. Lapum Saltarelli Judicem, D. Palmerium de Altovitis, D. Donatum Albertum de sextu Portæ Domus, Lapum Dominici de sextu Ultrarui, Lapum Blondum de sextu Sancti Petri Majoris; Gherardinum Deodati populi Sancti Martini Episcopi, Cursum Domini Alberti Ristori, Junctum de Biffolis, Lippum Becchi, DANTEM ALLIGHERII, Orlanduccium Orlandi, Ser Simonem Guidalotti de sextu Ultrarui, Ser Ghuccium Medicum de sextu Portæ Domus, Guidomen Brunum de Falconierii, de sextu Sancti Petri. Contra quos processimus et per inquisitionem ex nostro officio et curie nostre factum super eo et ex eo quod ad aures nostras et ipsius curie nostre pervenerit, fama publica precedente, quod cum ipsi vel eorum quilibet nomine et occasione Baracteriarum, iniquarum extorsionum et illicitorum lucrorum fuerint condemnati, quod in ipsis condemnationibus docetur apertius, condemnationes easdem ipsi vel eorum aliquis termino assignato non solverint. Qui omnes et singuli per nuntium communis Florentie citati et requisiti fuerunt legitime, ut certo termino jam elapso, mandatis nostris parituri venire deberent et se à premissa inquisitione protinus excusarent. Qui non venientes per clarum clarissimi publicum bapnitorem posuisse in bapnum communis Florentie subscripserunt (*sic*), in quod incurrentes eosdem absentis contumacia innodavit; ut hæc omnia nostre curie latius acta tenent. Ipsos et ipsorum quemlibet ideo habitos ex ipsorum contumacia pro confessis, secundum jura statutorum et ordinamentorum communis et populi civitatis Florentie, et ex vigore nostri arbitrii, et omni modo et jure quibus melius possumus, ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, talis perveniens igne COMBURATUR sic quod moriatur, in his scriptis sententialiter condemnamus. Lata, pronuntiata et promulgata fuit dicta condemnationis summa per dictum Cantem potestatem predictum pro tribunali sedentem in consilio generali civitatis Florentie, et lecta per me Bonorum notarium supra dictum. sub anno Domini, MCCCII., Indictione XV., tempore Domini Bonifacii Papæ VIII., die X. mensis Martii, presentibus testibus Ser Masio de Eugubio Ser Bernardo de Camerino, Notariis dicti domini potestatis, et pluribus aliis in eodem consilio existentibus.

APPENDIX No. 3.

Extract from the "Prœmio di Marsilio Ficino Fiorentino Sopra la Monarchia di Dante, Fradotta da lui di Latino in Lingua Toscana."

A Bernardo del Nero ed Antonio di Tuccio Manetti, Cittadini Fiorentini.

Dante Alighieri per patria celeste, per abitazione fiorentino, di stirpe angelico, in professione filosofo-poetico, benchè non parlasse in lingua greca con quello sacro padre de' filosofi, interprete della verità, Platone, nientedimeno in spirito parlò in modo con lui, che di molte sentenzie platoniche adornò i libri suoi; e per tale ornamento massime illustrò tanto la città fiorentina, che cosi bene Firenze di Dante, come Dante di Firenze si puo dire. Tre regni troviamo scritti nel nostro rettissimo duce Platone: uno dè' beati, l'altro de' miseri, e il terzo de' peregrini. Beati chiama quelli, che sono nella città di vita restituti; miseri, quelli che per sempre ne sono privati; peregrini, quelli che fuori di detta città sono, ma non giudicati in sempiterno esilio. In questo terzo ordine pone tutti i viventi, e de' morti quella parte, che a temporale purgazione è deputata. Questo ordine platonico prima seguì Virgilio; questo seguì Dante dipoi, col vaso di Virgilio beendo alle platoniche fonti. E però del regno dei beati, de' miseri, e de' peregrini, di questa vita passati, nella sua *Commedia* elegantemente trattò. . . ."

THE END.

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